

Supplement 5

Training Ward Scout Leaders

A Supplement to

A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders

2005 Edition

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Responding to the Call to Serve

When a call comes to be a Scouting leader, that call should be taken very seriously. You have a sacred trust that's been put upon you to be responsible in this calling that you've received. There are four major "T's," that I would like to refer to that will help you be successful in your calling as a Scouting leader.

The first "T" is the "t" of testimony. . . . The second "T" requires your time. . . .

The third "T" is to be **trained**. There are wonderful Scouting training camps and opportunities which give you the skills and attributes so that you will know the fine points of Scouting. Much of what is successful in this world comes down to the small, fine points, and you need to learn those.

And finally, your tenure, the fourth "T", is required, that you stay in [your] Scouting calling a lengthy period of time because, after being trained and learning the attributes of a good leader, we hope that those will endure for a lengthy period of time.¹

Elder Robert K. Dellenbach, former Young Men general president

¹ Donald E. Ellison, "Scouting in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," National Capital Area Council, *The Scouter Digest*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 4, Winter 1999, 13, 20 – 22, 35.

Why a Scout Leader Needs to Be Trained

Every deacon, teacher, priest, and Primary boy deserves a quality Scout program provided by trained Scout leaders. It takes a trained Scout leader to deliver an effective Aaronic Priesthood Scout program or Primary Scout program which will inspire the young men to Christlike living using the principles of Scouting. When boys or young men fail in Scouting, or if they fail to learn the Christlike principles found in Scouting, or if the ward's Scouting programs are not effective, it is usually due to the lack of Scout-trained adult leaders or leaders not trained in the Scout program to which they are called.²

Adair Petty, Varsity Scouting and Venturing Training Chairman
National Capital Area Council, BSA

If a Boy Scout activity has been planned following Scouting methods, it won't be just a group of boys wandering around in the woods cooking hotdogs and wondering what to do next. When properly planned and executed by trained individuals, the following will have been done in advance:

- Adult leaders will be acquainted with BSA safety regulations, and if special training is needed for an activity, the leaders (and for some activities, the boys as well) will have taken this training.
- Where the hike, camp, or other activity will be held has been determined well in advance, and maps have been obtained if they are needed.
- A tour permit has been obtained from the Scout council, if one is required; all requirements have been satisfied.
- On a lengthy camp (or an activity that involves some risk) boys will have had medical exams to make certain that they can stand the stress and strain.
- Transportation has been carefully arranged, with each driver meeting BSA safety requirements.
- There will be a boy leadership structure in place, and each boy knows what his assignment is and what is expected of him.
- Menus have been planned and food arranged.
- Each boy carries his own gear and his assigned portion of the troop gear.

This planning is what makes Scouting different from a casually "thrown together" youth activity and what makes Scouting useful and productive. Along with the fun that is always present in an activity, there is also the awareness of safety, the teaching of responsibility, and an opportunity for boys to lead boys. This same type of organization exists in all Scouting programs, each adapted to the particular age group that it serves. Whether involving Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, or Venturers, each program has its own set of rules, boy leadership structure, and adult and boy responsibilities.

In order for this well-organized planning to be done, and for the planned activity to be carried out properly, leaders must know how to make it happen, and this requires training. Scouting is too complex and detailed for anyone to make it work by relying only on his or her own intuition.

A Scout Calling Is Unique

Many new Scout leaders approach their Scout callings the same way they approach other Church callings, but these callings are very different and require totally different types of preparation. Active Church members have usually spent considerable time and effort learning about gospel principles during their Church life. They have attended sacrament meetings, Sunday School, seminary, and a variety of other Church meetings, all of which have prepared them for the usual Church callings. Thus they approach a typical new Church calling with an extensive background to help them in their new assignment. In many wards newly called leaders do not receive any special training for their new callings, nor do they feel that they need it.

² Adair Petty, member of the staff supporting the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee for the National Capital Area Council, in an e-mail message to Mike and Judy Kigin, April 6, 2005.

By contrast, new leaders accepting Scout leader callings often have had no previous Scouting experience, so they must begin from scratch to build the Scouting foundation that will be needed.³ By the time a new Scout leader has accepted a call, he or she should have seen the appropriate Fast Start video and should have some idea about how to proceed. Otherwise the Scouting program could become one of just trying to think of something to occupy the boys' time. The next step should be to immediately register with the BSA, obtain the appropriate Scouting literature, start studying it, and then enroll in the next available BSA Basic Leader Training session. Without this training a leader will essentially have no background for support and will be like a Sunday School teacher who has neither read the scriptures nor looked at a lesson manual.

Committee Members Need to Be Trained

Most ward leaders agree that training is essential for Scout leaders who work directly with the boys, such as the den leader, the Scoutmaster, the Varsity Coach, and the Venturing Advisor.⁴ In many wards, however, the necessity for having other leaders trained is not understood. As a consequence, committee members and the chartered organization representative are often not trained. This is unfortunate because these leaders also play (or *should* play) an important role in Scouting. The Scout committee is the support structure for the Scout leaders who work directly with the boys. Members of the committee should provide additional adult assistance to the unit. In the BSA organizational structure they act like a board of directors to oversee the operation of the Scout unit. How can they do this, however, if they do not understand how Scouting works and what a Scout committee is supposed to do? Without this training, committee members may not know that the committee should do the following things:

- Track advancement and see that it is recognized.
- Know the rules for advancement and see that these rules are followed.
- Make certain that BSA safety policies are followed in all Scouting activities.
- See that two-deep leadership is provided for all outings, not only for safety, but also to assure that Scout leaders are covered under BSA liability insurance. (Although two adults are not required to be present at all Scout meetings and other activities, common sense should prevail.)
- Know that the Scout unit needs to renew its charter every year (and know how to assist in this task).
- Know when a tour permit is required for an activity, and how to obtain one.

In many Scout units (non-LDS as well as LDS) the Scoutmaster (or Cubmaster, Varsity Coach, or Venturing Advisor) runs the entire program while the Scout committee and the chartered organization representative (COR) are, in effect, merely honorary positions, filled only to satisfy requirements for renewing the charter. Such Scout units often provide a poor program for boys. Scouting operates best when every person on the Scouting team knows what his or her role in Scouting is and does it.

The COR can also profit from Basic Leader Training. It is the responsibility of the COR to see that all of the ward Scout units are operating effectively, and this cannot be done without knowing how Scouting should operate.

Many Adults Serve the Youth in Diverse Church Callings

The intense interest that the Church has in its youth is demonstrated by the number of individuals who are responsible for them. To begin with, there is the stake president, who is responsible for all youth in the stake. He is followed by the counselor in the stake presidency who oversees youth programs. On the high council are men with two types of responsibilities: some high councilors work with the stake youth organizations while others work with bishops to help them administer their wards, including their youth programs. Other people involved with the youth are the stake Young Men presidency, the stake Young Women presidency, and the stake Primary presidency.⁵

³ A leader simply having been a Scout as a boy does not change this situation, nor does having a son who is a Scout. Adult Scouting responsibilities are very different from youth Scouting responsibilities.

⁴ Even in wards where the den leaders, Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Varsity Coach, and Venturing Advisor are not trained, they themselves often recognize that this training would be valuable, but they just don't get around to taking the training.

⁵ Sometimes the same individual may serve in two positions (such as being a high councilor and also the stake Young Men president), but each position has its own unique responsibilities.

Now moving to the ward, we have the bishopric whose major responsibility is the youth, with the bishop being the president of the Aaronic Priesthood in the ward and the president of the priests quorum. His counselors have the responsibility for overseeing the teachers quorum and the deacons quorum. There are also quorum advisers over each quorum, and possibly assistant advisers in some wards. In addition there is the ward Young Men presidency, the ward Young Women presidency, and the ward Primary presidency.

Then outside this priesthood chain, there are Sunday School teachers, Primary teachers, seminary teachers, coaches (in the Young Men and Young Women sports programs), Young Women camp leaders, and of course Scout leaders. Non-members are often amazed by how many Church leaders work with, and care about, youth in the Church, but for members, we simply view this as protecting a precious commodity.

Although not all of these leaders work directly with the youth, they all help determine the success of youth programs. It is because of these responsibilities that they need to know how these programs are organized, what their purposes are, and how they fit together. For example, let's say that a ward has poor attendance at Mutual and the bishop wants advice from his assigned high councilor as to how to improve attendance. How can the high councilor provide this advice unless he understands the role of the Mutual, what it is supposed to accomplish, how it operates, and what will make it interesting and attractive to youth? For another example, let's say that a Varsity Coach wants to take his boys on a high-adventure activity that will require considerable time and effort to be carried out successfully. He seeks support from the new stake Young Men president who was never a Scout as a young man, doesn't have a son who is, or ever was, a Scout, and has had absolutely *no* experience with Scouting thus far in his life. The answer to these two examples, of course, is for the high councilor to become acquainted with how to run Mutual successfully and for the new Young Men president to learn something about Scouting, and specifically about the role of high adventure in Scouting.

For there to be successful youth programs in the ward and stake, it is necessary for all leaders who work with the youth to have at least a superficial understanding of how these programs work together and what makes them successful. Thus, if we were to ask "Who else needs Scout leader training?" one could answer "All of the above." Of course, each of these individuals needs a different type and amount of training. The bishop doesn't need to know how to tie Scout knots or process an Eagle application, but he does need to know that he is the executive officer of the Scout units in his ward and as such, he is responsible for seeing that the units annually renew their charters and that ward Scout leaders are registered with the BSA before they work with boys.⁶ Similarly, a stake president doesn't necessarily need to know about merit badge requirements, but he does need to know how Scout registration fees are processed through the stake budget.

Scout Training for Young Men Leaders

It is particularly important for all Aaronic priesthood leaders and certain Primary leaders to understand how Scouting fits into the Young Men program. The Scout troop, the Varsity team, and the Venturing crew are extensions of the deacons, teachers, and priests quorums, respectively and, according to the *Scouting Handbook* (p.3), "... advisers to deacons, teachers, and priests quorums ... generally ... serve as Scoutmaster, Varsity Scout Coach, or [Venturing crew Advisor⁷], respectively.... If assistant quorum advisers are called, they may serve as Scoutmaster, Varsity Scout Coach, or [Venturing crew Advisor], or they may assist the quorum adviser in these responsibilities." Scouting and priesthood are to be blended together in a single program, with each contributing to a boy's development in the way that it does best. It is important to realize that this blending doesn't occur automatically. If priesthood leaders are not acquainted with both Scouting and priesthood (both sides of the coin, so to speak), this blending may be very difficult

⁶ This is also a Church requirement. According to Church policy, no person called to be a Scout leader can work with the boys until his or her application has been given to the district executive or received at the council office. Furthermore, a ward (and hence the bishop as its executive officer) is responsible for checking the moral worthiness of a newly called leader as far as he is able *before* the leader's application has been submitted. A criminal background check will be done by BSA, but the initial check on references is to be done by the bishopric.

⁷ With modifications in the BSA program since 1997, wards now sponsor Venturing crews rather than Explorer posts; therefore, instead of an Explorer post Advisor, we have the Venturing crew Advisor.

Another important point that is often misunderstood is that Scouting is a tool to be used to help develop certain qualities in a boy such as resourcefulness, willingness to fulfill responsibilities, leadership ability, and countless other qualities. When priesthood leaders (and especially bishops) do not understand the aims, goals, and especially the methods of Scouting, Scouting is often underutilized or misdirected. Sometimes alternative programs are developed to help provide these qualities, even though they are readily available in Scouting.

Finally, all leaders (not just Scout leaders) need to know about Scouting procedures and requirements that assure safety for youth. This includes having two-deep adult leadership on every Scout outing, having Scout leaders take Youth Protection training provided by the BSA, having Scout leaders receive adequate training for aquatic activities (and special training for any activity that involves some risk), and having individuals who drive boys to Scouting activities meet certain standards and have appropriate liability coverage. While the mechanics involved in following these rules are mainly the responsibility of Scout leaders, priesthood and Primary leaders also play an important role. A bishop (or any priesthood leader who has a supervisory responsibility over Scouting) who allows these requirements to be ignored may unwittingly contribute to an avoidable accident or death. How can these leaders know about various safety rules unless some training is provided?

Parents of Scouts can also profit by knowing more about Scouting than just that their son is a Scout. Some guidance should be provided for them, and they should be referred to the age-appropriate Scout handbook, which provides Youth Protection guidance and other information for parents.

Because certain stake priesthood and Primary leaders need Scouting training, just as the corresponding ward leaders do, a stake should also have training programs, and logically these programs should be developed and directed by the stake Young Men presidency.

Who Is Responsible for Training Scout Leaders?

The following excerpts are found on page one of the *Scouting Handbook*.⁸

Trained Scout leaders who understand the Scouting program are better able to serve boys and young men involved in Scouting activities.

While responsibility for Scouting rests primarily at the ward level, stake presidencies encourage bishoprics to train ward Scout leaders, and they offer the support of stake leaders in training. Bishoprics may request through the stake presidency the assistance of the stake Young Men or the stake Primary presidencies.

Additionally, the Boy Scouts of America sponsors Basic Leader Training and other courses to help leaders learn Scouting methods and skills. Scout leaders may enroll in [BSA] courses to supplement training from local priesthood leaders.

The above quotations establish three points: 1) Scout leader training is needed in order to produce a good Scouting program, 2) bishoprics, stake Young Men presidencies, and stake Primary presidencies are to train ward Scout leaders, and 3) the BSA provides additional training courses that help Scout leaders learn Scouting methods and skills.

Thus priesthood and Primary leaders are not just to be casual observers; they must train ward Scout leaders, and to do this effectively they must be trained in the BSA Scout programs for which they are responsible.

The individual training responsibilities of priesthood leaders are outlined on page two of the *Scouting Handbook*.⁹

The bishop is responsible to provide general direction for Scouting and ensure that it is properly organized and functioning.

The bishop's counselors help the bishop by overseeing the Scouting programs for eight-, nine-, ten-, and eleven-year-old boys and Aaronic Priesthood quorums. Under the bishop's direction, counselors should see that the various Scouting programs are organized as needed and that adult leaders are called and trained.

The stake Young Men presidency, under the direction of the stake presidency, may be invited by wards to help conduct training and implement activity programs, including Scouting, for Aaronic Priesthood quorums.

When invited by a bishopric, the stake Primary presidency may help orient ward Primary leaders in Scouting.

In the superseded 1985 *Scouting Handbook*, Scout leaders were encouraged to enroll in BSA training courses. Training by priesthood leaders was supplemental. By contrast, the 1997 *Scouting Handbook* directs priesthood and Primary leaders to take the lead in training Scout leaders. To do this, a ward must have a Scout leader training program. This program may vary from ward to ward because of local circumstances, but to be successful it must include a number of specific ingredients.

⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, (USA: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), 1. Underlining has been added for emphasis.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 2. Underlining has been added for emphasis.

Ingredients of a Successful Ward Scout Leader Training Program

- One individual must have the overall responsibility for developing the program. If this responsibility is divided among several individuals, it will likely fail.
- The training program should include everything that a Scout leader needs to know. In other words, it should be a *real* training program and not just a token program, thrown together so the ward can say that it has one.
- Training should be ongoing. It should not occur in spurts nor have gaps in it that allow the training program to become comatose. Training one leader or one set of leaders with a sudden burst of effort, and to then have training trail off and die is not really a training program.
- The training program must provide a sequence of four types of training: 1) initial Fast Start training when a Scout leader is first called; 2) BSA Basic Leader Training¹⁰ as soon as possible (see “The Four Levels of BSA Training,” starting on page 21 of this supplement); 3) an update for all leaders when Church or BSA policies or procedures change; and 4) a periodic review of individual duties.
- All trainers should know their specific responsibilities and make certain that this information is passed on to whoever fills their positions when they are released.

Who Should Organize the Ward Scout Leader Training Program?

This person could be anyone who will get the job done and do it well, but there is one person whose Scouting responsibility makes him or her the logical person for this assignment, and that is the **chartered organization representative** (COR). He or she represents the ward in its relationship with the Scout district and council, and works with the ward Scout units to make certain that they are functioning properly. The COR is described in the following quotation from the *Scouting Handbook*.

The bishop assigns one of his counselors or another worthy adult to serve as the ward’s representative to the Scout district or council. This leader works with the district [leaders¹¹] . . . to . . . ensure that all Scouts and leaders are registered; . . . [and to] encourage unit leaders and committee members to participate in **Scout training.**¹²

In most wards, the bishop selects one of his counselors to serve as the COR, but as indicated in the above quotation, any worthy adult may be called to this position. For Scouting to be successful, whoever is called to this position must be sufficiently interested in Scouting to faithfully carry out the duties of the COR. The COR need not be an expert on Scouting, but he or she should know enough about the nuts and bolts of Scouting to be effective in this calling. In fact, this individual should be trained in the duties of a COR, just as other Scout leaders are trained to fill the responsibilities of their positions.¹³

This person needn’t develop the ward training program alone, but also should not just give this assignment to someone else and take no further interest in it. It is important that the COR take an active role in its development, utilizing the experience of seasoned Scouters in the ward and stake. And while the COR needn’t be an instructor in the training program, he or she should know that what is being taught is accurate and as complete as possible.

¹⁰ Scout leaders should also be encouraged to participate in supplemental and advanced training such as monthly roundtables, Cub Scout leader pow wow, University of Scouting, first aid, wilderness skills, and Wood Badge. The more training that Scout leaders have, the more effective they will be in providing the benefits of the Scouting program to the youth and families in the ward.

¹¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, 2. This quotation identifies these leaders as being the “district commissioners or district executive assigned to the ward . . .” The chartered organization representative (COR) should also work with other district leaders such as district trainers, roundtable commissioners, and other members of the district committee who can help the COR develop a better Scouting program. Boldface added for emphasis.

¹² The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, 2. Boldface added for emphasis.

¹³ The BSA has prepared an orientation video (AV-02V017) for chartered organization representatives. Its viewing time is approximately ten minutes. It can be obtained at the Scout Shop in the nearest Scout Service Center. Scout districts also periodically provides the standard COR Training course (about four hours in length).

Developing a Scout Leader Training Program

**For a Scout leader the Scout motto “Be Prepared” means “Be Trained,”
but what does “Being Trained” mean for an LDS Scout leader?**

The training that an LDS Scout leader must have in order to be effective must include instruction in seven categories. The first three categories apply to all Scout leaders, both LDS and non-LDS, while the remaining four apply uniquely to LDS Scout leaders. The seven categories are described in the following sections of this supplement.

AN LDS SCOUT LEADER NEEDS TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND THE PROGRAMS OF THE BSA.

1. The Methods of Scouting
2. BSA Policies and Procedures
3. Youth Protection

AN LDS SCOUTER NEEDS TRAINING TO UNDERSTAND THE CHURCH’S SCOUTING PROGRAM.

4. Church Scouting Policies and Procedures
5. The Stake’s Role in the Scouting Program
6. Ward Scouting Policies
7. The Bishop’s Scouting Priorities

Developing the ward’s Scout leader training program consists of deciding what training is to be provided and what its content will be. To fulfill their callings, LDS Scout leaders need to be trained in each of the seven categories and, until they have received all of this training, they cannot be considered to be fully trained. How is this to be accomplished? In the following sections we discuss the seven categories and suggest ways that training might best be provided in each of these categories.

The Methods of Scouting

The secret of Scouting's success lies in the methods that it uses. Included among these methods (but not limited to them) are:

- The patrol method (which teaches a boy how to lead by letting him lead)
- The Cub Scout approach to Scouting (which draws parents into their son's Scouting life and provides young boys with what often is their first experience with leadership in a structured activity)
- The merit badge program (which acquaints a boy with careers and useful skills and helps him learn how to meet with, and work with, adult counselors who can help him learn about these careers and acquire these skills)
- An award or recognition structure (which recognizes the progress a boy has made)
- An advancement program (which expands a boy's abilities and monitors his progress)
- A ranking structure (which displays the progress that a boy has made)
- Adult shadow leadership (which lets a boy lead under the supervision of an adult)
- An outdoor program (which sharpens a boy's outdoor skills, develops resourcefulness, and increases his confidence in his own abilities)
- A uniform (which gives a boy a sense of belonging and a feeling of brotherhood with fellow Scouts)
- Pack meetings (which recognize a Cub Scout's accomplishments)
- Boards of review (which confirm an older boy's accomplishments)
- Courts of honor (which recognize an older boy's accomplishments)
- The Scout Oath, Scout Law, Varsity Pledge, Venturing Oath, Cub Scout Promise, and Law of the Pack (which bind a boy to an exemplary code of conduct)
- A Scoutmaster conference, Varsity Coach conference, or Venturing Advisor conference (where a boy can discuss his personal needs and goals with an interested adult)

A Scout leader needs to know the methods of Scouting and be able to use them effectively. Without this knowledge and understanding, the program that the leader conducts will not be an effective Scouting program. For the Scouting program in the Church to achieve its intended purposes, leaders need to be trained in Scouting methods and skills.

It usually takes about three years to become a skilled Scout leader. The first year is a learning year, where a Scout leader learns what Scouting is all about. The second year, the Scout leader begins to perfect the skills that were acquired the previous year (and correct the mistakes that were made due to inexperience). Finally, in the third year, the Scout leader begins to feel comfortable in his or her position and has sufficiently mastered Scouting skills to be able to develop a good program especially adapted to the specific needs of the pack, troop, team, or crew. This is a multi-step operation, and it is good to start it as quickly as possible. How is this done?

A Scout leader has three resources to help learn the Methods of Scouting: 1) a broad spectrum of Scouting literature; 2) various Scouter training courses that teach Scouting skills and techniques; and 3) help from seasoned Scout leaders who have successfully operated their own Scout units.

1. **Scouting literature.** New Scout leaders should be given the basic manuals needed for their callings. To mention a few basic items, there are the *Cub Scout Leader Book* (C33221C), the *Webelos Leader Guide* (C33853C), *The Scoutmaster Handbook* (C33009B), *Woods Wisdom* (7262), the *Varsity Scout Guidebook* (C34827A), the *Varsity Team Program Features* (C3483-7, 8, and 9), the *Venturing Leader Manual* (C34655D), and the *Passport to High Adventure* (C4310). The corresponding youth manuals should also be made available to a new leader. Information about safety in Scouting can be found in *Guide to Safe Scouting* (C34416D), and information about Scouting outdoor skills can be found in the *Field Book* (C33104) or online at <http://www.bsafieldbook.org/>.¹⁴
 - Some wards provide all the basic materials needed when they call a new leader in the Scouting program, while other wards encourage new leaders to purchase the materials on their own (which they will keep after they are released from their callings).
 - New leaders need to carefully read the literature applicable to their callings.
 - Each ward should develop a Scouting library that contains literature and information about Scouting methods and skills. (See: “A Ward Scouting Library” on page 30 of this supplement.)
 - Leaders should have access to other Scouting literature not published by the BSA, some of which can be obtained in the Scout Shop at the NCAC Marriott Scout Service Center.
 - Online resources are also available including:
 - i. www.lds-scouts.org/ (the NCAC LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee Web site)
 - ii. www.meritbadge.com/ (merit badge requirements and more)
 - iii. www.boyscouts-ncac.org/pages/1310_website_links.cfm (the National Capital Area Council’s Web site, which has a list of useful Web site links)
 - iv. www.scouting.org (the Web site for the National Council)
2. **Scouter training courses.** A training program for ward Scout leaders must help provide the new leaders with appropriate skills and knowledge by:
 - Making available to each new leader the appropriate Fast Start training (Online or as a video), which should be taken before the leader meets with the boys. See pages 21 – 22 of this supplement.
 - Encouraging each new Scout leader to take the appropriate Basic Leader Training as soon as possible. See pages 22 – 24 of this supplement.
 - Encouraging Scout leaders to attend the monthly district roundtables.
 - Encouraging Scout leaders to attend Scouter training activities such as the council’s University of Scouting, Cub Scout leader pow wow (a council or multi-district event), and the council (or district) Program Launch (see page 24 for descriptions of these training opportunities). Determine when these activities are held by referring to district and council calendars.
 - Encouraging leaders to attend safety courses such as *Safe Swim Defense*, *Safety Afloat*, and *Climb On Safely* in order to learn how Scouting methods are implemented.
3. **Help from seasoned Scout leaders.** This last resource is especially important. One of the best places to obtain this help is at the Scout roundtables. Here Scouting methods are discussed, Scout leaders share their successes (and at times their failures), and Scouters receive suggestions for improving their programs.

Scouters can also get lots of advice and ideas from currently active or former Scouters in their own wards or stakes who are usually happy to share their first-hand experiences with the new leaders.

¹⁴ See topic 63 in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* for additional BSA publications of interest to Scout leaders.

BSA Policies and Procedures

The Boy Scouts of America has established various policies, procedures, and standards to effectively administer Scouting and keep it safe. In addition, the BSA has set up various safety requirements and training for Scouting activities, such as “Safe Swim Defense,” “Safety Afloat,” and “Climb On Safely.” Some of this training must be repeated every two years for a leader to maintain certification.¹⁵ Scout leaders need to be guided by these standards, be trained in these procedures, and conform to these policies.

Scout leaders must become acquainted with current BSA policies and procedures through training. Although ward leaders can conduct this training, it is unlikely that a ward Scouter can be found who can organize this training adequately unless he or she is currently serving on, or has recently served on, a Scout district or council training team. By far the best way to get this training is to attend a regular BSA training course sponsored by the district or the council. This training should consist of, first, viewing the appropriate Fast Start video (see pages 21 – 22) and, second, taking the appropriate BSA Basic Leader Training courses (see pages 22 – 24 of this supplement).

As discussed earlier, the person who takes responsibility for the “Ward Scout Leader Training Program” is the chartered organization representative. The COR must help provide appropriate training to new leaders regarding applicable BSA policies and procedures.

“Fast Start training is the first step for any new volunteer and *is to be delivered immediately after a new leader registers and **before he or she meets with any youth member.***”¹⁶

A set of Fast Start videos should be owned by the ward and the appropriate video should be shown to the new leader as an introduction to the Scouting program (see page 21 of this supplement). Fast Start training for Cub Scout leaders and Boy Scout leaders is also available online.

The COR should assure that the new leaders enroll in the appropriate Basic Leader Training courses as soon as possible after they have been registered. These courses are described starting on page 21 of this supplement, “The Four Levels of BSA Training.”

¹⁵ Proof of some of this training (a training card or certificate) is required for conducting certain Scouting activities.

¹⁶ National Capital Area Council Web site: <http://www.boyscouts-ncac.org/pages/67_fast_start_training.cfm>
Italics and boldface print added for emphasis.

Youth Protection

The Boy Scouts of America has established procedures to protect youth from child abuse and to protect the reputation of leaders.¹⁷ A Scout leader must understand and follow these procedures.

Youth Protection Training for Adults

All adult leaders working with Scouts of all ages are required to take BSA Youth Protection (YP) training. Adult leader Youth Protection Training is taught by BSA district or council trainers. Adult leaders working with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Varsity Scouts take *Youth Protection Guidelines for Adult Leaders*. Adults working with the Venturing program must take *Youth Protection Training for Adult Venturing Leaders*. Both courses may also be taken online on the NCAC web site, <www.boyscouts-ncac.org/pages/71_youth_protection.cfm>, although there is some advantage in taking this training face-to-face from district or council trainers. In-person training will provide an opportunity to discuss youth protection with non-LDS Scouters as well as profit from their experience.

- Leaders should frequently discuss the issue of child abuse in various ward meetings with other youth leaders. They should also discuss a Scout leader's responsibility in assuring that abuse does not occur and the requirement to report all incidents of *possible* child abuse to the proper authorities.
- Professional Scouters in the National Capital Area Council (NCAC) recommend that adult leaders repeat YP training every two years (but this is *not* required).
- YP training is required for many activities. The BSA Local Tour Permit Application states "At least one registered adult who has completed BSA Youth Protection Training must be present at all . . . events and activities that require a tour permit." Tour permits are required for travel over fifty miles, overnight camping, and for activities involving some risk, such as swimming, boating, and other water activities.
- Leaders who take these courses are issued training cards, which they should keep handy and produce as proof of completion of the courses if requested.

Youth Protection Training for Youth

1. **"A Parent's Guide"** is provided in the front of the *Wolf, Bear, Webeles*, and *Boy Scout Handbooks*. When a boy first receives each of these books, he and his parents should review the age-appropriate youth protection material together.
2. **Youth Protection Videos:** There are also age-appropriate Personal Safety and Youth Protection training programs for boys ages eight to eighteen, which should be obtained and shown to the youth by Scout leaders and ward leaders. April is the BSA's Youth Protection Month, during which, coordinating with the bishopric, every ward Scout unit should conduct youth protection and personal safety awareness training for their youth and parents. Be aware of the Church policy asking that parents be invited to view the videos with their sons.

These YP training materials are:

- **"It Happened to Me"** video for Cub Scouts (ages 8 – 10) and parents, AV-09V011, \$19.50
- **"A Time to Tell"** video for boys ages 11 through 13 and their parents, AV-09V004, \$15.95
- **"Youth Protection: Personal Safety Awareness"** video for Varsity Scouts and Venturers (boys ages 14 through 18) and their parents, AV-09V027, \$15.95.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has specific policies regarding the viewing of the youth protection videos by the youth. The Boy Scouts of America LDS Church Relationships Committee sent the following letter to bishops.

¹⁷ For example, "One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as a Scoutmaster's conference, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths." BSA National Council, *Guide to Safe Scouting*, 2004 edition, 4.

Youth Protection Videos Usage in the LDS Church¹⁸

In March 2001 the General Scout Committee of the Church expressed concern about the showing of the Youth Protection videos, *It [Happened] to Me* and *A Time to Tell*, without the child's parents being present. In the BSA Youth Protection guidelines, parents of Cub Scouts may *invite* their sons to attend the training and view *It [Happened] to Me* video with them. For the Boy Scout age, parents are invited to view *A Time to Tell* video **with** the boys. The General Scout Committee of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has asked that a parent or guardian be present when either of these Youth Protection videos are shown in any units chartered to the LDS Church. The Church suggested that the unit leaders show the videos to parents **prior** to seeing it with their sons. This may prevent misunderstandings that might occur. Please advise your LDS unit leadership of the above guidelines when you conduct council and district Youth Protection Training. [signed] LDS Relationships – BSA Office.

This prior viewing could be done at a special meeting for parents, or parents could borrow the video to watch at home. Videotapes and guides are available from the BSA for this training and it is recommended that each ward purchase (or have copied from the council office) these training videos.

The policy for showing the Youth Protection video, *Personal Safety Awareness*, with its intended audience being young men and women ages fourteen through twenty, was not mentioned in the letter quoted above. It has been discussed, however, and the following direction has been given: "Wherever possible the Church wants parents involved with their youth. They should be invited to view *Personal Safety Awareness* with their sons. It is critical, however, that the older youth see the video, whether or not their parents attend the viewing. This guidance on parental involvement in viewing the video was conveyed by Charles W. Dahlquist II, Young Men general president, in response to a question raised during the October 2004 General Conference Young Men Open House and Training."¹⁹

¹⁸ Boy Scouts of America – LDS Church Relationships; 36 South State Street, Suite 1175; Salt Lake City, Utah 84111-1467, phone (801) 530-0004, (no date).

¹⁹ Donald E. Ellison, LDS representative to the Northeast (BSA) Region Relationships Committee, e-mail to Mike and Judy Kigin, February 9, 2005.

Church Scouting Policies and Procedures

Church Scouting policy is described in the *Church Handbook of Instruction: Book 2* under the topics “Aaronic Priesthood” and “Primary” and the *Scouting Handbook*. These two handbooks discuss the Scouting responsibilities of priesthood leaders; the coordination of priesthood and Scouting activities; the role of the Primary in Scouting; the eleven-year-old Scouting program; the relationship between priesthood quorums and the Boy Scout troop, the Varsity Scout team, and the Venturing crew; and other administrative matters. The two handbooks say little about Scouting methods and the BSA policies mentioned in categories 1 and 2. There are some differences between BSA and Church policies and procedures of which LDS Scouters need to be aware.²⁰ Detailed discussions of these can be found in Supplement 2 regarding the Aaronic Priesthood and in Supplement 3 regarding the Primary.

The Stake’s Role in the Scouting Program

While Scouting is a ward program and not a stake program, some stake policies affect how it is conducted. One such policy deals with registration fees and charter renewal fees. These fees are paid by the stake from general Church funds, upon request by the wards. Ward Scout leaders need to know how to obtain these funds when they renew their Scout charter or register new boys and leaders. To make paying registration fees easier, the National Capital Area Council has established stake Z-Accounts²¹ for units sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This allows wards with units in the National Capital Area Council to submit individual registrations, and to renew their charters in a more timely and efficient manner, without having to enclose a check (except for *Boys’ Life* subscriptions) with the paperwork.

A stake may also have its own additional policies that affect Scouting. For example, a stake might have a transportation policy that specifies how youth are to be transported to a Church activity when transportation is organized by Young Men leaders, or a stake might set the time when youth activities must end.

In addition, a stake may have certain procedures that youth leaders must follow. For example, it might require youth leaders to obtain a stake tour permit²² when a youth activity involves significant travel by personal car, or to use a standard stake permission slip for major activities. Note that whether a stake tour permit is required or not, adult Scout leaders must obtain a BSA tour permit for Scout-sponsored activities that are overnight, more than fifty miles from the regular meeting location, involve water activities [including public or private swimming pools], or involve potentially hazardous activities. Keep in mind the Church policy regarding outings: “When youth participate in Church activities that are held outside of the local vicinity, parents should sign a copy of the Parental or Guardian Permission and Medical Release form. The person who leads the activity should have a signed form for each participant for each activity.”²³ Examples of this and other parental permission slips are found in topic 66 of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

²⁰A partial list of these differences includes different age requirements, no participation in the Tiger Cub program, some camping restrictions, special fundraising rules, and no young women in Church Scout units. As programs change, other differences may develop. These changes will be announced in the quarterly meetings of the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee. Changes will also be included in updates of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

²¹ For more information about Z-Accounts see topic 10, “The Charter Renewal Process,” in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*. Information can also be obtained from Don Ellison, the executive officer of the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee by e-mail (donellison@aol.com), by fax (703-644-3116), or by letter (8718 Evangel Drive, Springfield, VA 22153).

²² A Church “Activity Plan” form is available from the Church Distribution Center (Publication No. 33809). Whenever youth leaders plan an overnight activity, or an activity that involves travel outside the local area, they should use this form to communicate their plans to the priesthood leader who oversees the activity and obtain his approval.

²³ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2*, 278. The “Parental or Guardian Permission and Medical Release” form can be obtained from the Church Distribution Center or online: <www.ldscatalog.com/> (Publication No. 33810).

Ward Scouting Policies

The Boy Scouts of America and the Church each have formal written Scouting policies. Some stakes may also have such policies, but most wards do not. Nevertheless, each ward has its own way of “doing Scouting.” For example, each ward has its own way to reimburse a Scout leader for out-of-pocket expenses, or to reserve the cultural hall for a Scouting activity, or to provide transportation for Scouting activities. Wards also differ in how the Scout calendar is incorporated into the ward calendar, how parents are informed about a Scouting activity, the division of responsibilities among committee members, where Scouting supplies are stored, who keeps Scouting records, the type of permission slip²⁴ that is used, and a multitude of other details that arise in the day-to-day operation of a Scouting program.

Each ward also has its own traditions, like the Fourth of July pancake breakfast sponsored by the Scout troop, the annual Memorial Day hike up Old Rag Mountain that the Varsity team organizes and in which the whole ward participates, the annual “Mother and Scout Breakfast Over a Campfire,” the “Father and Scout Spring Chariot Race,” and the flag-raising ceremony by the Cub Scouts every Sunday morning followed later in the day by the Venturing crew lowering the flag in the evening. A new Scout leader needs to know about these customs and traditions, and the “way that Scouting is done in our ward.”

The Bishop’s Scouting Priorities

The bishop is responsible for the spiritual well-being of every boy in the ward and thus is concerned about how well every ward program in which boys participate is functioning. He is the president of the Aaronic Priesthood and oversees all activities that are related to priesthood responsibilities. Since Scouting is a basic component of the Primary program and the Young Men program, as well as being an extension of the priesthood quorums, the bishop also plays an active role in Scouting by serving as the head of the chartered organization (also known as the institution head or executive officer), and in many wards is registered as a member of one or more of the Scout committees. Just as Baden-Powell was sometimes called the “Chief Scout of the World,” the bishop could be called “Chief Scout of the Ward.”

Because of the important role that the bishop plays in Scouting, it is suggested that he be a part of Scout leader training. Each group training program might be closed with a “bishop’s minute” (modeled after the “Scoutmaster’s Minute,” which is part of the closing ceremony of a Boy Scout troop meeting). Here he can present his vision of how Scouting can improve the ethical, moral, and social life of the young men in the ward, and suggest ways that ward Scouters can help Scouting principles become an active part of a boy’s life. At the beginning of the Scouting year it is also quite appropriate for him to call together everyone involved in Scouting for a spiritual kick-off.

How to Assure That the Ward’s Scout Leader Training Program Is Complete

Training about the unique policies and programs of the Church should be taught by Church members, since non-LDS trainers are not usually acquainted with Church, stake, and ward policies and procedures. Some suggested criteria for selecting these LDS trainers are:

- Instructors should be experienced Scouters who are acquainted with both BSA and Church policy so they know how these policies interface with each other.
- Instructors should be up-to-date on Church policies.
- Instructors should be able to provide substantial and detailed information about BSA programs and related Church programs.
- Instructors should understand how Scouting, the Young Men program, and priesthood quorum activities are to be blended into three cohesive programs, one for each age group.²⁵

²⁴ A “Parental or Guardian Permission and Medical Release” form can be obtained from the Church Distribution Center or online: <www.ldscatalog.com/> (Publication No. 33810). This form is available in topic 66 of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

²⁵ See Supplement 2: The Role of Scouting in the Aaronic Priesthood Program. See also: Thane J. Packer, *On My Honor: A Guide to Scouting in the Church* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998).

Some individuals who might be asked to be ward or stake trainers (assuming they satisfy the above qualifications) are bishopric counselors, members of the stake Young Men presidency, experienced stake and ward Scouters, and (upon request) staff members of the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee.

The following is a list of suggestions that will help the ward trainers and the bishopric members who are responsible for calling new ward Scout leaders to better understand the Church's Scouting program.

- Obtain copies of the *Church Handbook of Instructions: Book 2 – Aaronic Priesthood*, the *Scouting Handbook*, and Thane J. Packer's book entitled *On My Honor: A Guide to Scouting in the Church* (available at Church bookstores) and carefully read them.
- Learn the differences between LDS and non-LDS Scouting procedures and organization.
- Study how the eleven-year-old Scout program is organized and administered.
- Understand the Scouting responsibilities of priesthood, Young Men, and Primary leaders.
- Understand how ward Scout units are an integral part of the priesthood quorums.
- Review stake policies that relate to and affect the ward's Scouting program.
- Review ward procedures that are used to operate the ward's Scouting program, especially those related to integrating Scouting into the quorum structure and coordinating the activities of the ward Scout units.
- Make sure that the bishop understands his role in the Scout leader training program.

If we have the right kind of leadership through real boys' men, they will have it, enjoy it, and receive the blessings which come from the program. The responsibility rests with the priesthood—stake presidencies and bishoprics—to see that this leadership is provided and that every boy is reached.²⁶

Elder Ezra Taft Benson
General Conference, April 1951

²⁶ Improvement Era 54 [June 1951], page 423, <www.exploring.org/ga/crews/625/ScoutingLDS.doc>

The Four Levels of BSA Training

The BSA has four levels of training: Fast Start, basic leader training, supplemental and advanced training, and Wood Badge. To provide a good Scouting program, a Scout leader needs the first two levels of training, and could profit from the third and fourth. Information about specific BSA training courses can be obtained from several sources: your Scout district training chairman; your Scout district calendar; and for Scouters in the National Capital Area Council, *The Scouter Digest*, which every registered Scouter should receive six times a year. Training information is also available online at the BSA Web site: <www.scouting.org/boyscouts/resources/18-813/>

Fast Start

The first level of BSA training is called Fast Start. Each branch of Scouting (Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing) has its own version of Fast Start. They are recorded on videotape (Fast Start for Cub Scout leaders and for Boy Scout leaders are also available on DVD) and have accompanying training booklets. The videos or DVDs can be purchased from the Scout Shop at the local Scout Service Center or can be obtained from the BSA National Supply Distribution Center.²⁷

The purpose of Fast Start is what its title implies: it is designed to provide a new Scout leader with enough information to get started. According to BSA policy, “Fast Start training is the first step for any new volunteer and is to be delivered immediately after a new leader registers and before he or she meets with any youth member.”²⁸ Fast Start videos are brief. They introduce new leaders to Scouting and show them the types of things they will be doing in the positions they hold. The video might include a glimpse of a Scout meeting in progress, a conference between a Scout leader and a boy, a planning session, a voice clip by a Scout leader describing the responsibilities of the job, and so on. Later, in New Leader Essentials and in the specific training for the particular job (i.e. den leader, committee member, Scoutmaster) the leader will be provided with more detailed information.

Fast Start should be shown to a new Scout leader as soon as the calling is extended, so the details of the calling may be explained completely. Some experienced Scouters even feel that viewing Fast Start would be helpful during the interview for the calling. Should the person have some concerns about accepting a Scouting calling (such as a heavy workload or frequent travel), by viewing Fast Start this individual would know right away the specific Scouting responsibilities this calling would entail. An informed decision based on viewing the video could avoid a potentially awkward situation of a person first accepting the call and then shortly thereafter having to ask to be released due to time or other constraints.

One advantage of Fast Start is how easy it is to use. Once a ward has obtained a set of Fast Start videos, training is available any time it is needed. Minimum facilities are needed and no training staff is required. Fast Start can be viewed in one’s home by a single individual who has just been called to be a Scout leader, or the video may be shown to a group of Scouters as they review their responsibilities, or to Young Men and Primary leaders who need to know more about Scouting.

The ward should obtain a set of Fast Start training videos and use these to introduce new Scout leaders to the Scouting program.²⁹ Included in Fast Start training are:

- *Cub Scout Orientation* video, AV-01V012, \$15.95
- *Cub Scout Leader Fast Start* video series, AV-01V022A, \$19.95
- *Boy Scout Leader Fast Start* video series, AV-02V026, \$19.95
- *Varsity Scout Leader Fast Start* video, AV-02V004, \$15.95
- *Briefing the (Venturing) Organizing Committee*, AV-03V011, \$14.95
- *New Crew (Venturing) Fast Start* video, AV-03V013, \$14.95

²⁷ Fast Start videos may also be copied free of charge in the basement of the Marriott Scout Service Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Scout leaders wanting this service must bring a blank tape: call for details (301-530-9360).

²⁸ National Capital Area Council Web site: <http://www.boyscouts-nca.org/pages/67_fast_start_training.cfm>

²⁹ The prices listed in this supplement were the current prices in February 2005.

Fast Start training for most Scouting programs also is available online at no cost:

- Cub Scouts: <www.scouting.org/cubscouts/faststart/>
- Boy Scouts: <www.scouting.org/boyscouts/faststart/>
- Venturing: www.scouting.org/venturing/faststart/
- Varsity Leader Start-Up Kit: <www.lds-scouts.org>

Basic Leader Training

Basic Leader Training provides Scout leaders with the essential information that they need in order to provide a good Scouting program. Most courses are provided by Scout districts, although some may be taught at council level. The BSA training schedule can be found in your Scout district calendar, which every ward should have. If your ward units don't have a district calendar or council calendar, you can obtain one from your unit commissioner or another district leader, although most councils and districts also have their calendars online.

Overview of Basic Leader Training: What Makes a Trained Leader?

The following list is copied from the National Capital Area Council's web site:³⁰

Cub Scout leaders are considered trained when they have completed New Leader Essentials and the Cub Scout Leader Specific training for their position. Webelos leaders are also encouraged to attend their appropriate outdoors course.

Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters are considered trained when they have completed New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills.

Troop committee members are considered trained when they have completed New Leader Essentials and the Troop Committee Challenge as their Leader Specific training.

Varsity Scout leaders and assistants are considered trained when they have completed New Leader Essentials, Varsity [Coach] Leader Specific Training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills. [Varsity team committee members take the Troop Committee Challenge as their Leader Specific training.]

Venturing crew Advisors, assistant Advisors, and crew committee members are considered trained when they have completed New Leader Essentials and Venturing Leader Specific Training.

Basic Leader Training has two parts.

1. **New Leader Essentials** is a generic course explaining Scouting that all new leaders must take. It is a 90-minute course and is offered on a regular basis at the district level. The course may be taken in one's own district, or if it is more convenient, the new leader may attend the training offered by another district. Once a leader has taken New Leader Essentials, it need not be repeated for another Scouting calling.
2. **Leader Specific Training** consists of the courses listed below. The leader specific course a person should take depends upon the position the leader occupies. These Leader Specific courses are three to eight hours in length and each includes youth protection training. The leader may take the training through his district or an adjoining district if it is more convenient. The online description of these courses follows:³¹

³⁰ <www.boyscouts-ncac.org/pages/213_training_overview.cfm>.

³¹ The material on Leader Specific Training was copied from the (BSA) National Capital Area Council's Web site: <www.scouting.org/boyscouts/resources/18-813/specific.html>.

Cub Scout Leader Specific Training

Cub Scout den leaders, Webelos den leaders, Cubmasters, and pack committee members can complete this training in one day or two or three evenings. The leader is considered trained upon completion of New Leader Essentials and the Leader Specific training for that position.

Boy Scout Leader Specific Training

For Scoutmasters and assistant Scoutmasters, this training is divided into four parts. The first three parts concentrate on troop operation and can be completed in one full day or three evenings. The fourth part, which focuses on outdoor skills, lasts approximately a day and a half, depending on the skill level of the new leader. The leader is considered trained upon completion of New Leader Essentials, Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster Leader Specific training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills [see below].

Varsity Coach Leader Specific Training

The Varsity Coach Leader Specific training is a five-hour indoor course that covers team organization, leadership positions and leadership training, program method, program resources, high adventure, Varsity awards, safety, uniform, and team administration. The Varsity Scout program has many significant differences from the Boy Scout program, so to run an effective Varsity Scout program for the youth and to meet their needs, the leader must take the Varsity Coach Leader Specific training course. The leader is considered trained upon completion of New Leader Essentials, Varsity Coach Leader Specific training, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills. Note: If the Varsity leader has previously taken Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills as a Boy Scout leader, or if he took the former Scoutmastership Fundamentals course, he will not need to repeat Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills, and will be considered fully trained upon completion of Varsity Coach Leader Specific Training.

Venturing Leader Specific Training

Developed for Venturing Advisors, assistant Advisors, and crew committee members, this training incorporates Venturing's current adult leader training. New Leader Essentials and Venturing Leader Specific training can be completed in one day, after which the leader is considered to be trained.

Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills

Outdoor skills are critical to the success of the Scouting program, and Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills will provide leaders with the basic outdoor skills information needed to get a Scouting program going. Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills is the required outdoor training for all Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, and Varsity Scout Coaches [and assistant Coaches]. The skills taught are based on the outdoor skills found in *The Boy Scout Handbook*. The course is also ideal for Venturing leaders because it focuses on skills that build confidence and competence in leaders conducting outdoor camping experiences. The course is a day and a half long, but a leader can move at an accelerated pace by demonstrating mastery of a specific skill. The emphasis is on the skill, rather than on attending the course. [Keep in mind the guidance on overnight camping found in the *Scouting Handbook*.³²]

³² “However, Church [Scout] leaders should not participate in Scout training such as Basic Leader Training or Wood Badge on the Sabbath, or overnight camping that includes mixed groups of men and women...” (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, 1). Church leaders attending Saturday through Sunday training courses should try to arrange with the training staff to have the bulk of the training information taught before they must leave on Saturday night. When Friday evening through Saturday training sessions are held, Church Scouters (men and women) can go home to sleep following the Friday evening training session and return to the site the next morning to complete the required training.

Troop Committee Challenge

For troop committee members, Leader Specific training includes the Troop Committee Challenge. By following the *Troop Committee Training Syllabus*, participants can complete the challenge in three hours, after which they are considered trained. [This is also the Leader Specific training required for members of the Varsity team committee.]

Supplemental and Advanced Training

Just as medical doctors profit from the continuing education that they are required to take in order to keep abreast of medical practice, so Scout leaders can profit from the continuing education that the BSA provides through a variety of programs. Included in this category of training are the following:

Roundtables. Sponsored by the district, roundtables are held on a monthly basis (less often for Venturing). They give Scouters the opportunity to meet with experienced district Scouters who can help them with the practical problems that they face. Roundtables also provide information about upcoming Scouting events and assist leaders in providing full Scouting programs for their youth.

Program Launch. This is a council or district activity held in the spring of the year where units are provided with the basic information that they need for planning their coming Scouting year's program.³³ It is important to have at least one unit representative attend Program Launch to pick up the unit's packet. A serious review of the information contained in the packet can help a unit avoid missing out on Scouting opportunities, provide updated information about activities and fees, and provide background information for Scout leader training. All leaders would benefit from attending Program Launch in order to get ideas for activities, outings, and special events.

Cub Scout Leader Pow Wow. This is a one-day event, usually on a Saturday in the fall, where Cub Scout leaders take a variety of interesting and informative classes that will help them to better provide the benefits of the program to the Cub Scouts in their wards. This is offered by the council or by three or four districts who combine to present a multi-district pow wow.

University of Scouting. This is a one-day event, usually on a Saturday in the winter, where Scout leaders (Cub Scouting through Venturing) can take a variety of one-hour classes in a wide range of topics.

Back Country Outdoor Leader Training and High-Adventure Training: These courses are taught once each year to prepare leaders to take youth safely on high-adventure, camping, and hiking activities in more challenging and remote areas. They are highly recommended for Varsity and Venturing leaders.

Safety Courses: These include such courses as *Safe Swim Defense*, *Safety Afloat*, *Climb On Safely*, *Trek Safely*, *BSA Safety*, first aid, and CPR. Some of these courses are required for those participating in popular Scouting activities. Other courses are highly recommended to help leaders conduct safe Scouting activities. These courses are offered on a district or council level.

Wood Badge for the 21st Century

Wood Badge provides advanced training for Scout leaders. Wood Badge has evolved into the core leadership skills training course for the BSA. The new Wood Badge course focuses on strengthening every volunteer's ability to work with and lead groups of youth and adults and is less focused on outdoor skills, which are more effectively addressed in other courses. If Fast Start and Basic Leader Training are considered to be the elementary school and high school of Scouting, then Wood Badge is Scouting's college and graduate school. LDS Scouters should try to take advantage of this training, keeping in mind the special policies of the Church regarding overnight camping and Sunday training mentioned in the footnote under *Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills*.

³³ Typical information provided in a Program Launch packet: BSA policies, district and council calendars, district and council activities, district committee and commissioner rosters, program planning guides, health and safety flyers, insurance forms, medical forms, information from district and council committees such as the camping committee and the high-adventure committee, and adult and youth application forms.

A Note to the Reader

The objective of this supplement to *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* has been two-fold: first, to explain the obligation that the Church has placed on wards and stakes to train their Scout leaders; and second, to discuss some of the challenges that are involved in providing this training. No attempt has been made thus far to provide a script for a training session or specify what should be taught in a training session. We have described why Scouting training is necessary, who should receive it, and who is responsible for providing it. In general terms we have also talked about what training should consist of (but not, in detail, how this training should be provided). Most of the discussion thus far has been general and may not answer the practical questions that someone who is charged with providing this training might ask and the answers that would be given. The intent has been to point wards and stakes in the right direction and then let them handle the necessary details.

Every ward and stake must organize a Scout leader training program that best suits its own circumstances, and wards and stakes that already have such programs in operation are to be commended. If your ward (and stake) has such a program, and it is a good program that provides all of the training outlined above, you will probably not need the detailed information contained in the rest of this supplement, and hence you may choose to not read further.

However, if your ward (or stake) has limited Scouting experience, if you are trying to build up a weak Scouting program, or if you are inexperienced in developing a training program, you may welcome the additional help provided in the remainder of this supplement.

The section which follows has been addressed to bishops and the chartered organization representatives, as they have the ultimate responsibility for training ward Scout leaders. It will prove very useful, however, for all adults new to Scouting, so they will know what training should be undertaken in order to successfully begin serving in their Scouting callings.

I hope our bishops will call mature men to these positions and let them serve for a few years. I see no reason why a man in his forties, fifties or even sixties could not serve as an adviser/Scoutmaster, adviser/Coach, or adviser/Venturer leader. If I were a bishop, I would no more consider not having a team or crew than I would think of not having a teachers quorum or a priests quorum.³⁴

Elder Robert L. Backman
First Quorum of the Seventy
Former Young Men general president

³⁴ <www.ldsscouting.org/All_Programs/followbrethren/followbrethren.html>. Elder Backman made these comments while serving as the Young Men general president.

Detailed Steps for Developing a Ward Scout Leader Training Plan

We begin with a suggestion for bishops and chartered organization representatives. Examine the eight-part training plan described below and choose those parts that you think will help you set up your ward's training program. Tailor these parts to suit your ward's needs. Then put the unused parts aside to be looked at later should a need for them arise.

1. Preliminaries: "Be Prepared." Your training program will be easier to plan if you gather certain material together before you begin to formulate a program. Here are some of the things that will be helpful.

- Obtain the Fast Start training videos that you need for the Scout units sponsored by your ward, or know where they can be viewed online.³⁵ See pages 21 – 21 for titles and online addresses.
- Obtain the age-appropriate Youth Protection videos to show to the Scouts (Cub Scouts through Venturers). See pages 15 – 16 in this supplement.
- Obtain a copy of your Scout district's yearly calendar. It will list district leader training and roundtable dates as well as district activities in which your Scout units can participate. Calendars are generally provided at Program Launch in the spring and for the NCAC, the council calendar and district calendars are available online at <www.boyscouts-ncac.org/>. Calendars should also be available from your ward's unit commissioner or from another district leader. The training dates of nearby Scout districts may also be of value if some of your ward Scout leaders have schedules that conflict with your district's training sessions.
- Become acquainted with the various training chairmen of your Scout district. Obtain a district roster from your unit commissioner. The training chairmen will be listed on it. The unit commissioner's name should be available from the council service center. In addition, Scout leaders registered in the National Capital Area Council receive *The Scouter Digest*, a bimonthly publication that lists key district officers.
- Obtain BSA adult leader and youth application forms and keep a supply on hand. Many wards like to keep copies of these applications handy in the ward clerk's office and in the bishop's desk drawer. The latter is especially convenient when extending a calling for a Scouting position or when interviewing a young man for advancement in the priesthood, and hence for advancement into the next program of Scouting as he turns fourteen or sixteen years of age.
- Begin setting up a ward Scouting library by starting to collect basic Scouting literature. See page 30 of this supplement and topic 63, "Your Ward Scouting Library," in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.
- Obtain copies of the *Church Handbook of Instructions: Book 2, Atonic Priesthood* (Publication No. 35702) and the *Scouting Handbook* (Publication No. 35814).³⁶ These handbooks set forth Church policy as it relates to Scouting.
- Obtain a copy of the latest edition of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* published by the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee of the National Capital Area Council. Make sure you also have the most current supplements to this reference. The *Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* and current supplements are available online at <www.lds-scouts.org/>.
- Find out your stake's policies and procedures that relate to Scouting. Some of these will be general policies that affect all youth programs and others will apply specifically to Scouting. Work closely with the stake Young Men presidency when doing this.

³⁵ These are available at the Scout Shop in the NCAC Marriott Scout Service Center, either by purchase or by asking NCAC staff to copy them for you at the facility (an empty videotape is given in exchange).

³⁶ These publications may be obtained from the Church Distribution Center.

- ☑ Review how Scouting is conducted in your ward. Ask current ward Scout leaders what a newly called Scout leader needs to know about how Scouting is implemented in your ward. Use this information to help plan the “ward policy” part of your training. The chartered organization representative should also ask the bishop how he wants the bishopric to participate in training.

If the stake is planning to present a stake Scouting training program, the stake Young Men president should confer with the stake president regarding what role the stake president wants to play in this training, what aspects of the training he would like to have stressed, and perhaps what stake meetings or portions thereof are appropriate for a Scouting training mini-session.

Some of these preparations can be done relatively quickly, while others will take more time and may require some research. None of these, however, is very difficult.

After this information has been gathered, study it well. It will be the basis of your training program. Especially study the Aaronic Priesthood section of the *Church Handbook of Instruction: Book 2* and the *Scouting Handbook*, since their content will be the basis for most of the LDS segments of your training program. Make certain that you understand the differences between LDS and non-LDS Scouting.³⁷ You might require the assistance of someone who knows both programs well.

2. “Who Needs What, and How Fast?” A large number of leaders need to know about Scouting, but not with the same urgency or level of training. Thus, the next step in your planning is to decide what type of training each leader needs, and how quickly this training needs to be provided.

Urgency. All registered Scout leaders should be trained immediately after they have been called, set apart, and registered with the BSA. Otherwise they are flying blind. Priesthood and Primary leaders (both ward and stake) who have stewardship over Scouting programs should be trained soon after they accept their callings. Other priesthood and Primary leaders who need to know something about Scouting should be trained as soon as possible, but it doesn’t have to be a crash course.

Levels of Training. Three groups of leaders need specific and detailed training related to their role in Scouting. They are: 1) registered Scout leaders, 2) priesthood and Primary leaders who in their Church positions approve Scouting activities or make basic decisions that determine how Scouting is operated (but are not themselves registered), and 3) priesthood leaders who are not registered Scouters but who play a role in renewing the charters of the ward Scout units, such as the bishop and the stake financial clerk (who oversees the stake’s Z-Account). The training of other leaders can be more general.

Types of Training. For most wards a variety of training formats will have to be used in order to serve the needs of everyone who should be trained. Some training will have to be one-on-one in order to provide it as quickly as possible, while other training can be done in a group setting. Some training will be formal, other training informal. Some leaders need BSA training as part of their training, while other leaders are not required to take BSA training although they would profit by having it. Each of these types of training is briefly described below.

Use wisdom as you plan your training. If the audience only needs general information and you load them up with specific information, they may be overwhelmed and bored; and if they need specific information and only get generalities, it will be of limited value to them, and they will also be bored.

3. BSA Training: “ASAP!” If Scouting training is scheduled properly, by the time a Scout leader has been called, set apart, and registered with the BSA, the new leader should have seen the appropriate Fast Start video and have a cursory idea of his or her responsibilities. This training is, however, elementary and more detailed training is needed as soon as possible. Since you have obtained the training dates of your ward’s Scout district as part of your preliminary preparation, you know when and where the next district training session will be held, so there should be

³⁷ See “How We Are Different,” topics 7 and 8 in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*. Help may also be obtained from the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee of the National Capital Area Council. See also <www.lds-scouts.org/>.

no delay in getting a new leader enrolled in it. It is best for a Scout leader to be trained in the ward's own Scout district since this will acquaint the new Scouter with district leaders who can provide help and support when needed. If, however, this will delay training, or if a ward leader's schedule does not allow the Scouter to attend training in his or her own Scout district, the leader can arrange to attend training in a nearby district. Basic Leader Training in all districts should be essentially the same. If there is any question as to which training course a leader should enroll in, discuss this with your unit commissioner or another district leader.

4. One-On-One Training: "Informal." One advantage that Scout districts have when they schedule a training session is knowing that the large number of packs and troops in their district will usually guarantee a reasonable attendance. Wards do not have this advantage. Frequently there is only one new leader who needs training. In this case, the temptation might be to delay training until someone else is called, or to do no training at all. This temptation must be vigorously resisted.

Because one-on-one training is always informal, it can concentrate on the specific needs of the individual being trained. Nevertheless, there are some things that *every* new leader needs to know. Because of this, it is suggested that the ward and stake develop a "Single Leader" training package that contains this general information. Then, when a one-on-one training session is being planned, all that needs to be added is additional material specific to the particular leader who is being trained. It would be helpful for this "general package" to be in written form so that the leader can use it for reference after training is completed. This could present a problem, however, because if it is put in written form, the temptation might be to just give it to the new leader and not conduct a face-to-face training session. This should be avoided.

One advantage of one-on-one training is that it can concentrate on the specific responsibilities of the person being trained. Therefore it is important for the person giving this training to know specifically, and in detail, what these responsibilities are. This preparation, plus the ability to readily answer questions that might arise, can make one-on-one training very effective. Nevertheless the person being trained may still want to attend a formal group training session held later.

5. Group Training and a "Beginning-of-the-Year Scouting Review." Group training is the most efficient way to train, but it is also more difficult to arrange, especially when the training involves priesthood and Primary leaders who have busy schedules and many responsibilities. It is especially difficult when attempting to train leaders who consider Scouting to have a low priority.

Group training can range from just a few people gathered together in a classroom conducting an informal question-and-answer session to a formal multi-stake "Little Philmont"³⁸ where all priesthood, Primary, and Scout leaders in the participating stakes are invited and the program has multiple sessions.³⁹ However, regardless of how simple or extensive the training is, it should always be well planned. Ad hoc, off-the-cuff, training usually leaves out some important things and as a result, often has less value to those attending. Group training has several features that make it more complicated and difficult to arrange than one-on-one training. Two of these are *when* the meeting should be held and *where*. In addition, there is the issue of *what* to teach, since different leaders need to know different things with different levels of understanding and detail.

Well before ward and stake calendars are developed for the coming year, the stake Young Men president and the chartered organization representative in each ward should know what formal stake and ward Scouting training sessions are needed during the coming year, and make certain that they appear on ward and stake calendars. A check should also be made with the stake president and the bishops to determine where training can be done as part of other meetings.

³⁸ This is a special training meeting modeled after the annual LDS training course for stake presidencies held at the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. A *Little Philmont* is held at a stake or multi-stake level for all stake and ward Scout leaders, as well as all priesthood and Primary leaders with Scout-related callings. At times it is effective to hold this meeting in an outdoor setting, which, in a way, simulates the New Mexico experience. Suggestions about how to organize and operate a Little Philmont can be obtained from the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee of the National Capital Area Council (see also <www.lds-scouts.org/>).

³⁹ Since large multi-stake activities involve considerable effort they are usually held only every few years, or if they are held more frequently, different stakes alternate taking responsibility for organizing and hosting them.

When you are attempting to train priesthood leaders who have heavy schedules and are pressed for time, it is often difficult to schedule training sessions that are long enough to provide all of the information that these leaders need to know. In this case you may have to resort to using a training format that might be called “bits and pieces.” In this format you use the short interval of time that is available in a meeting (such as a bishopric training meeting or a stake or ward council meeting) to explain just one aspect of Scouting such as “The priesthood leader’s role in youth safety” or “How leadership is developed in Scouting.” To be effective, this brief training snippet must be concise and cohesive. When training is done in bits and pieces, each bit cannot convey much information in and of itself, but collectively this type of training can provide considerable information, and, most importantly, it can provide training for leaders who might otherwise receive no training at all.

Other occasions when training might be done in bits and pieces are: during a unit committee meeting, where a short time is set apart to review some aspect of Scouting policy; during a stake priesthood leadership meeting, where some feature of Scouting can be briefly explained in a short talk; and unplanned opportunities that appear unexpectedly and serendipitously.

Occasionally training can be made more interesting and useful by holding it in an outdoor setting. This is especially true if teaching Scout skills is part of the training. In some locations husband-and-wife or family accommodations are available in a state park or other campground that has conference facilities. While the Scouters attend the training sessions, side-programs can be provided for the non-Scouter spouses and/or children, when this is feasible. This arrangement makes training a family activity.

One custom that has proven useful is holding a “Beginning-of-the-Year Scouting Review” where all leaders in the ward who are involved in Scouting are brought together in the fall as the youth programs get underway. The meeting serves to revive interest after the summer vacation, and also provides an opportunity to review the purposes and objectives of Scouting and Church and BSA Scouting policies.

6. Parental Involvement. Parents do not need Scouting training in the strict sense of the word, but they can profit from knowing more about Scouting. A simple anecdotal story illustrates this. One Scoutmaster found that his Scouts were not properly clothed for the expected weather when they arrived at church ready to leave for camp. To solve this problem, he called a parents’ meeting and asked the parents to try the following experiment. “Before your son leaves home to go camping, see what type of clothing he is planning to wear,” he requested. “Then dress up in clothing that is comparable to the clothing that your son has chosen to wear and go outside when it is dark and the cool of the night is beginning to settle in. Stay there for a considerable length of time with no other protection than the clothing you are wearing. Stay there long enough so that the residual heat that you brought with you from the house has dissipated. By the time you come in, you will know whether your son is properly dressed to go camping.” When the boys showed up for the next campout, everyone was properly dressed.

Just as these parents profited from this meeting, so all parents of Scouts can benefit from learning more about how Scouting operates. In the outdoor program, they need to know what equipment their son needs. They need to have a pack, troop, team, or crew calendar (and be informed when it is updated). They need to know what responsibilities they have, such as providing transportation for Scouting activities, including what requirements the drivers need to satisfy (such as having the required amount of liability insurance). They should be acquainted with the advancement program and know what awards their son can earn. Knowing these things will make Scouting more valuable to both boys and parents, and make parents more interested in what their son is doing in Scouting. A suggestion—begin each Scouting year with a parents’ meeting. Holding periodic parents’ meetings is a Scouting tradition.

7. A Ward Scouting Library. Priesthood and auxiliary leaders, and especially teachers of Church classes, are greatly helped by having access to a ward (or building) library. Here they have a ready source of Church literature, pictures, manuals, handbooks, guides, visual aids and audiovisual equipment, recordings of Church conferences and other important Church broadcasts, as well as classroom aids such as VCRs and classroom supplies. This rich source of material allows teachers to enhance their teaching and helps leaders prepare for meetings without having to collect all of this material themselves or purchase it out of their personal funds.

Ward Scout leaders also need various materials in order to carry out their assigned tasks, and it would be helpful (and produce better Scouting) if there was a ward Scouting library that they could use. Scout leaders need the basic

leader's handbooks and youth manuals that the BSA has developed for their particular positions, but just having the basic manuals is analogous to teaching a Church class and having only a class manual and a teacher's guide. Some Scout leaders may choose to purchase their own personal copies of the basic manuals that they use, but it would be unreasonable to expect them to obtain *all* of the supplemental Scouting materials that they should have (such as other Scouting manuals, guides, merit badge books, song books, and other aids that the BSA and others have published). The way to solve this problem is to establish a ward Scouting library that could be housed in a closet in the building or in some other convenient location. Items in the Scouting library could be paid for from funds allotted to the Scouting budget. For a list of suggested materials to have in an LDS ward Scouting library, refer to topic 63, "Scouting Literature, Videos, and DVDs," in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.⁴⁰

8. Resources. In planning a ward Scout leaders training program, it is essential to know what resources can be utilized. Some of these are:

- *Publications* listed previously in other sections of this supplement, and in other parts of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* (topic 63, and in supplements 2 and 3 on the role of Scouting in the Aaronic Priesthood and the Primary).
- *BSA literature*, much of which can be obtained from the Scout Shop located in the nearest council service center. A list of BSA literature is also included in the Boy Scout Leader Official Retail Catalogue.
- *Other Scouting literature* not published by the BSA. Some of this can also be obtained in the Scout Shop at the NCAC Marriott Scout Service Center while Church materials are ordered through the Salt Lake Distribution Center. A growing number of online resources are also available (see page 13).
- *A ward's unit commissioner(s)*. Each Scout unit is assigned (by the district) a unit commissioner (UC), an experienced Scouter who helps the unit in a number of ways. Sometimes the various Scout units in a ward have different unit commissioners: one UC for the pack, and one or more UCs for the older-boy units. Ward Scout leaders should know who their UCs are, and if they do not, they should contact any district leader for the UC's name and contact information. Some Church units have Church members assigned as their unit commissioners, although this is variable. Unfortunately, some LDS unit commissioners do not regularly attend the monthly commissioner meetings sponsored by the district, and thus are not a good source of current, vital information. If this is the case, ward leaders must encourage their UCs to attend these meetings so that they can bring the ward Scout units the information that is provided there.⁴¹
- *District roundtables*, which are usually held on a monthly basis.
- *Experienced ward and stake Scouters* (including those no longer serving in Scouting callings in the ward or stake)
- *Other LDS Scouters*, such as ward or stake members who are serving, or have recently served, in Scout district or council positions. The Church encourages priesthood leaders and others involved in Church Scouting to volunteer to serve in other BSA positions.⁴²
- *Staff members of the LDS Scouting Area Relationships Committee of the NCAC*. These staff members (from throughout the council area) are experienced Scouters, many of whom for numerous years have held council positions or have served in various positions in their Scout districts. They work in all branches of Scouting (Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Venturing) and carefully monitor changes in BSA and Church policy. They can often assist a ward or stake in developing a Scout leader training session. The ward or stake must do the actual planning, of course, but members of the committee can offer suggestions and in some cases participate in the training.

⁴⁰ Items that should be in the ward Scouting library change as new books about Scouting are published and BSA changes its programs. Some recommendations are found in the 2005 edition of *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

⁴¹ See topic 19, "The BSA Unit Commissioner," in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

⁴² "Priesthood leaders may participate as volunteers in district and council Scouting committees and activities to solidify relationships between Scouting and the Church. In every instance, leaders should do everything possible within Church policies to create good will, mutual understanding, and cooperation between the two partners" *Scouting Handbook*, 1. (Italics added for emphasis).

Ours is not a boy problem; it is a man problem. Our boys want Scouting; we want them to have it. Our problem is leadership. Our great need is to provide the leadership to meet the demands of the boys. Through Scouting we can help them develop real character; we can teach them cooperation; we can help them develop qualities of leadership; we can teach them the value of staying power.⁴³

President Ezra Taft Benson
Thirteenth President of the Church

⁴³ Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1988), 242. Quoted from the online source located at <www.exploring.org/ga/crews/625/ScoutingLDS.doc>

What Do Various Church Leaders Need to Know About Scouting?

In this section we ask the two questions that should be asked *before* any training session is planned. These are “What do the individuals being trained need to know about Scouting?” and “What is the best way to tell them about it?” Because of space limitations it is impossible to list everything that is important, but here is a sampling.

A. Things that every registered Church Scout leader should learn from Scouting training

Registered Scout leaders need BSA training in order to understand Scouting methods, Scouting policy, and their responsibility to protect youth. They must also know how Scouting is conducted in the Church. Among the important topics that should be included in their training are:

- Scouting for Aaronic Priesthood young men fits well into the quorum structure.
- There needs to be a “priesthood purpose” for every activity.
Church leaders have emphasized that every Young Men activity should have a priesthood purpose and in order to help leaders follow this instruction the Church has prepared a manual entitled *The Activity Book*, which can be obtained from the Church Distribution Center (publication no. 31455000, Spanish: 31455002).
- The strong religious qualities that characterize Scouting must be preserved.
Duty to God is one of the three promises that a Boy Scout makes when he repeats the Scout Oath, and “A Scout is reverent” is a point in the Scout Law. Scout leaders should know that in their active outdoor programs they should never let these activities overshadow the religious components of Scouting. Scout leader training should include practical suggestions for how a Scout leader can do this.
- There are several important differences between LDS Scouting and non-LDS Scouting.⁴⁴
Some differences are: no young women in Scout units, no adult co-ed training that involves non-segregated overnight camping, boys enter Scouting at age eight and advance by age rather than by school grade, the eleven-year-old Scout program, various policies concerning no outdoor activities (and traveling to outdoor activities) on Sunday.

B. Things that every Aaronic Priesthood and Scout leader should know about Scouting for Young Men (12 – 18)

- All ward Aaronic Priesthood advisers and assistant advisers should be registered in some Scouting position and receive the training suitable for the position they hold.
- Scouting plays a crucial role in the Young Men program.⁴⁵
- The Boy Scout troop, Varsity Scout team, and Venturing crew serve an integral role in the deacons, teachers, and priests quorums, respectively.
- Each leader plays an important role in molding Scouting and priesthood into a single cohesive program, through whatever priesthood calling or Scouting position they hold.
- Leaders must learn to adhere to the BSA’s safety rules—the level of detail to be learned depends upon the level of responsibility the leader has in seeing that these rules are followed.
- Leaders must employ the methods that Scouting uses to teach leadership (such as the patrol method). For some leaders, just explaining the principle of shadow leadership and how this is implemented in Scouting is sufficient. For leaders who work directly with boys, this training should be detailed, specific, and accompanied by many examples.

⁴⁴ See “How We Are Different,” topics 7 and 8 in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders* for more details.

⁴⁵ See “Supplement 2: The Role of Scouting in the Aaronic Priesthood Program.”

C. Things that Primary leaders need to know about Scouting for eight- though eleven-year-old boys⁴⁶

- All Primary leaders and other adults with Scouting responsibilities for Primary boys ages eight through eleven should be registered with the Boy Scouts of America and trained as appropriate.
- Primary leaders play a key role in Cub Scouting.
- Leaders must learn how Cub Scouting is structured.
- The parent-involved nature of Cub Scouting should be promoted in order to bring parents into the Scouting life of their son.
- The eleven-year-old Scout program operates within, but separate from, the troop. The eleven-year-old Scouts (under the direction of the Primary) and the deacon-age Scouts (under the direction of the Aaronic Priesthood) are part of the same Scout troop, but meet separately under different leaders. When this arrangement is not understood, there may be an unnecessary break in a boy's Scouting progress because the Scoutmaster and the Scout leader for the eleven-year-old patrol do not coordinate their activities.
- When properly utilized, the patrol method operates well in the eleven-year-old Scout patrol.

D. Things that a bishop needs to know in his key role of being the executive officer of the ward

- He has an important role in renewing the ward's unit Scout charters.
- He is ultimately responsible for seeing that BSA safety rules are followed.
- He must assure that all leaders are properly trained.
- The bishop is responsible for assuring that the moral and criminal background of new Scout leaders are checked before their adult applications are submitted to council. A new member in the ward should not be interviewed for a Scouting position until a check has been made with his or her previous bishop to make certain that there are no moral or abuse problems and that the new member is suitable to work with boys in Scouting.⁴⁷
- It is the responsibility of the bishop to see that all Scouting positions are filled. Not having the required leaders may delay a Scout unit renewing its charter.
- The bishop needs to understand and promote the qualities that Scouting can develop in a boy through its leadership and outdoor programs.
- The bishop approves the financial support that Scouting needs in order to be successful, and he must encourage the ward members to support the council's annual Friends of Scouting campaign.

⁴⁶ See "Supplement 3: The Role of Scouting in the Primary Program" for specific details about this topic.

⁴⁷ To avoid embarrassment on the part of the individual, when a bishopric member interviews a person prior to extending a calling in Scouting, he should ascertain whether there is anything that might prevent the person from passing the criminal background check, which is now required of all new Scout leaders. It is suggested that the person's name not be presented for the sustaining vote of the congregation in sacrament meeting until after the person's application has been submitted to the district executive or received by the council office.

E. Some particular things that the ward's chartered organization representative (COR) needs to know⁴⁸

- The COR is usually one of the counselors in the bishopric (although the person called to this position may be any worthy adult), and is the bishop's representative to the district and the council for all four Scout units in the ward (i.e., there is not one COR per Scout unit).⁴⁹ The COR is a voting member of the district committee and attends the annual business meeting.
- The COR coordinates the programs of the Cub Scout pack, the Scout troop, the Varsity team, and the Venturing crew so these separate programs work smoothly together, enabling a boy to move from one to the next with no advancement problems developing.
- The COR must understand the importance of the Key Scout leaders' meeting⁵⁰ and is the person who conducts this meeting on a monthly basis.
- The COR must be able to recognize warning signs that indicate the ward Scouting program is not functioning properly.
- The COR has a key role in annually renewing the charters of the ward Scout units.
- It is the COR's responsibility to check references for all new adult applications (either the COR or the bishop must sign each adult application).
- The COR is a member of the district committee (i.e., the ward's representative in district and council operations).

F. Things that members of the stake Young Men presidency need to know

- They must understand the role of the stake in helping wards train their ward Scout leaders.
- They must encourage ward support of the Friends of Scouting campaign, and assist as necessary.
- The stake Young Men presidency can help provide stake Scouting activities when requested.
- They need to encourage ward Scout units to participate in district and council activities, keeping in mind specific Church policies affecting participation (such as no Sunday camping, women leaders not camping with the boys, eleven-year-old Scouts not accompanying the older Scouts on overnight activities, and other specific Church policies⁵¹).
- They should help maintain a balance between the Church sports program and Scouting, so that neither dominates the other. These two activities share scheduling dates on the ward and stake calendars and have equal call on a boy's time.

G. Things that high councilors should know about Scouting as they work with bishops

- High councilors should be aware that a ward's youth program is not complete unless it has a Scouting program in place and functioning well.
- High councilors should remind ward leaders that a good Scouting program often holds a wavering boy in the Church until he can mature and gain a testimony for himself. Without the youth and Scouting programs to involve him, the boy may be lost.

⁴⁸ See topic 14, "The Role of the Chartered Organization Representative: The COR" and topic 28, "The Ward Scouting Family: The Chartered Organization Representative" in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

⁴⁹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, 2.

⁵⁰ See topic 34, "Coordinating the Ward Scouting Program: Key Scout Leaders' Meeting" in *A Scouting Reference for Ward Leaders*.

⁵¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Scouting Handbook*, 1, 4.

H. Things that stake presidency members need to know

- It is the stake's responsibility to pay the registration fees for all adult leaders and youth members, and to pay the fee required to renew each unit's charter annually. The stake will be reimbursed for these fees by Church headquarters.
- The stake presidency must understand the Church's position regarding Scouting.

The stake presidency must emphasize that Scouting is *the* Church activity program for young men, and boys ages eight "through fifteen should be registered. Young men ages sixteen and seventeen should be registered when they are pursuing rank advancements or when stake presidents and bishops choose to sponsor Venturing crews ... for young men of this age."⁵² A ward or a stake should not develop a substitute program for Scouting unless there is a special need for one, and unless this program has been approved by the Church.

- Scouting can develop leadership skills, particularly at the ward level.
- Scouting can sometimes hold a boy's interest in the Church during those years before he has acquired a testimony and this can keep a boy from being lost to the Church.
- The status and effectiveness of Scouting in the stake are profoundly affected by the stake presidency's attitude towards Scouting.

This interest is shown by the stake presidency frequently attending Scout activities, taking an interest in what Scout activities are planned, offering time in stake meetings for training to be done, and encouraging stake and ward leaders to attend Scout activities in appropriate Scout uniforms (in stakes and wards where this does not create a financial difficulty).

⁵² The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Church Handbook of Instructions: Book 2*, 187.

Conclusion

Training is a vital part of the initial preparation and learning for all adults who are called to work with young men in the Scouting program. The Church has stressed for many years the importance of having trained men and women as role models and friends for the young Scouts. It is the responsibility of *many* leaders (ward, stake, district, and council) to encourage all adults registered in Scouting positions to receive the training necessary for them to be successful in their Scouting callings. Trained leaders are better able to provide the best possible Scouting programs for the boys and young men in the Church. Better programs result in better prepared young men.

Young Men General President Charles W. Dahlquist II, speaking at a conference in September 2004, discussed the “Four Ts of Youth Leadership: Testimony, Training, Time, and Tenure.” In his remarks about Training he stated:

Along with testimony, training is essential to all we do. A recent graduate from a trade school must generally complete an apprenticeship before he can be employed. For a physician, it is called residency and internship. All jobs requiring competency require training.

In the United States and Canada, we have a wonderful partnership with the Boy Scouts of America. Scouting in these countries provides a vital application phase of the learning process for our Aaronic Priesthood quorums. I have found an unexplained reluctance on the part of some priesthood leaders to implement fully Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing as the activity arm of their quorums and to become trained themselves. Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone once said, “I do not believe that Varsity Scouting is on trial in the Church, nor is Boy Scouting, Cub Scouting, or [Venturing]. But rather it is my firm belief that bishops, and the ward leaders, the advisers, Scoutmasters, Coaches, and [Venturing Advisors] are on trial. The program will work if they will work and become trained and put into effect the things they have been trained to do” (personal letter to Thane J. Packer, Oct. 7, 1997, in Thane J. Packer, *On My Honor: A Guide to Scouting in the Church*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1998], 57).

My experience has shown that this is true. As a newly called Scoutmaster, I think I did a reasonable job. We accomplished much, advancement was passable, and we garnered a number of awards at our annual council Scout camp. But not until I finished my basic Scouting training and then Wood Badge training did I realize how much more we could have done to strengthen our boys.

As a presidency, we believe training—both Aaronic Priesthood training and training in the Boy Scouts of America—is vital to the success of an Aaronic Priesthood experience. In fact, in those parts of the world where Scouting is not a feasible partner, we must develop efforts to simulate that which Scouting does so well to support the Aaronic Priesthood and help young men accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. In that vein, Duty to God was not intended to take the place of Scouting but is intended to help young men of the Aaronic Priesthood become better prepared to go to the temple, serve missions, and accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. Brethren, it is time we received the training that is there to help us become better priesthood and Young Men leaders and recognized that Scouting is a vital part of the Aaronic Priesthood activity program and can help greatly to build better-prepared missionaries, better husbands and fathers, help prepare our young men to receive the ordinances of the temple, and help reactivate those who have drifted.

The other day I was at the checkpoint for a 100-mile endurance run. I noticed, not unexpectedly, that not one of the runners was competing in flip-flops. They all had quality footwear because, to a great extent, their footwear would either make or break their experience during a very grueling 24- to 36-hour experience.

To even think that someone would compete in such an event or in an Olympic event in flip-flops is unthinkable. Yet sometimes I think that in the Aaronic Priesthood it is as if we have purchased a \$200 pair of running shoes that we then place on a shelf and then try running the marathon in flip-flops. Wouldn't it make more sense to use the wonderful, tried, and tested program in the way it was intended? I challenge each of us in these next six months to get with the program. Get those \$200 running shoes down from the shelf, get trained, and then apply the program in the right way.⁵³

⁵³ Charles W. Dahlquist, II, Young Men General President's Message: “Strengthening and Vitalizing Aaronic Priesthood Quorums,” September 2004, Open House, Salt Lake City <<http://lds.org/pa/display/0,17884,5431-1,00.html>>.

