

CoachCounselor's Guide: Supporting the New-Scout Patrol in Troop 28

CoachCounselor (CC) is the uniformed Scouter in Troop 28 who oversees a New-Scout (1Y) Patrol.

New Scout ('First Year') Patrol Team

♣ Senior Patrol Leader	SPL	runs the Troop
♣ Patrol Leader	PL	manages the Patrol and answers to the SPL
♣ Assistant Patrol Leader	APL	stands in for an absent PL
♣ Troop Guide	TG	coaches 1Y PL and teaches Scout skills
♣ CoachCounselor	CC	mentors the 1Y PL and TG

CoachCounselor Duties

- ♣ Safety recognizes and stops unsafe behaviors
- ♣ Distance enables a Scout-led Troop so long as PL, TG, and SPL follow Policy* safely
- ♣ Example exhibits Scouting ideals (uniform, preparation, and deportment)
- ♣ Skill oversees Scouts who are teaching skills
- ♣ Coaching mentors PL and TG on leadership style and the EDGE method
- ♣ Advancement enables Scouts to achieve First Class at earliest reasonable opportunity
 - encourages Scouts to take ownership and responsibility for their own progress
 - signs off Scouts' Handbooks when requirements are met
 - [tracks progress](#) so he can help prioritize Program elements
- ♣ Policy notices violations and encourages constructive solutions to PL and TG
- ♣ Program attends and stays mindful of Troop activities for the month
- ♣ Coordination updates SM and ASM of progress and opportunities in the 1Y Patrol

* Links to policies are listed on the last page of this document.

So, a CoachCounselor helps introduce bridging Cubs into Boy Scouting while not unduly infringing upon the responsibilities of the Scouts in a Scout-led Troop. Some situations and Scouts require more attention than others; the continuum ranges from clear need for immediate intervention on one end (say, a Scout is about to chop off his thumb with an ax or violate the one-on-one contact restriction with a Scouter) to patient resolve on the other to let the Patrol make and repair its own mistakes (say, not taking the shortest path across camp or failing to respond to Reveille promptly).

Scouting Ideals are well-explained in New Parent Orientation and deserve more space than can be committed here. Still, the headings are useful:

♣ Aims

- Character Development
- Citizenship Training
- Physical and Mental Fitness

♣ Methods

- Ideals: Oath, Law, Motto, and Slogan
- Patrols
- Outdoors
- Advancement
- Associations With Adults
- Personal Growth
- Leadership Development
- Uniform

The CC helps the Scout and Patrol fit into the Troop, succeed, and grow by designing activities that respect these ideals and reinforcing them in conversations and by example. Clear examples of living the Ideals might include

♣ Uniform the CC wears the proper field uniform and encourages Scouts to do so also

♣ Law inappropriate behavior is related to the proper Law: “is that Kind and Friendly?”

Scout-Led It’s very important to remember that Scouts learn by doing . . . sometimes by doing poorly; independent failure is often a growth experience. Baden-Powell reminds us to never do for a boy what he can do for himself; B-P knew not to get in the way. But it’s also true that capable PL’s often employ questionable judgment, and well-intentioned TG’s may be distracted and not perfectly discharge their duties. Enforce safety and policy when necessary, but let Scouts do most of **their own** management so far as they can.

Teaching The traditional role of the CC is teaching skills. This is easy: if the TG isn't good at, say, sharpening an ax or tying a bowline, that is the perfect time for the CC to step in (especially if the TG is demonstrating a skill improperly). If you have plenty of time, you might suggest the TG bring in another Scout known to have the needed expertise, but you might feel that program continuity and Scout attention are at stake and simply handle the situation yourself.

EDGE Method of Skill Teaching

- ♣ Explain how it is done - Tell them
- ♣ Demonstrate the steps - Show them
- ♣ Guide learners as they practice - Watch them do it
- ♣ Enable them to succeed on their own - Use memory aids, practice it, they teach it

Gray Areas Here's an example of a middling case and a way of helping: A Scout is running in camp (a violation of one of the Troop's few rules but hardly life-and-death), but only you the CC notice. You have a split second to decide if he's at risk and whether resolution can tolerate a few seconds' delay. You might surmise that injury is not imminent and are able to catch the PL or TG's attention with, say, a subtle finger pointing toward the offending Scout accompanied with a shoulder shrug and a lift of the eyebrows that convey: hey, are you seeing what's going on in your patrol and are you happy with it? Ideally, the PL would react by promptly stopping the offending behavior. One way the PL or TG might reinforce understanding is to invite the Scout to explain to the rest of the Patrol the reason for the very rule he was ignoring, maybe something friendly and un-sarcastic like "yes, when I came into the Troop, I too had trouble remembering why we even have a rule against running; can you explain to the Patrol why that is?" It's a ten second exercise that usually ends with "oh, yeah: if I fall while running, I'm much more likely to get hurt" and everyone then going on with his day suitably reminded. However: if an unsafe behavior isn't resolved promptly because the TG doesn't understand what to do, you must decide as CC how to fix the problem by stepping in yourself.

Ask Your Patrol Leader What we clearly *don't* want is a Program with adult Scouters yelling orders and prohibitions around camp (or a meeting or anywhere else, for that matter). So defer to the Scouts and their chain of command; indeed, the Old Goat motto isn't "Ask your Patrol Leader" for nothing. Even if the PL and the TG don't have an answer to one of their problems or questions, they should elevate to an Assistant SPL and then to the SPL himself; odds are the SPL will know the answer or direct the Scout in the correct direction. In, say, the question of "who do I get a BlueCard from," the CC could answer, but why would he: the TG should know, the ASPL can help, and the SPL should certainly know the answer. Step in if an incorrect answer is given, or, better yet, defer to the proper Committeeman with a Socratic or guiding question: "I don't think that's right; maybe you and the SPL should consult the Advancement Chair...that's Mr Streit: do you know who he is?" and send them on their way. Maybe you ask a follow-up question later to make sure they found the right answer (in this case: a Scout should ask the SM for a BlueCard before beginning a Merit Badge). Encourage Scouts to rely upon each other and to consult the correct Scouter resource, but, of course, don't let any avoidable risk or misunderstanding arise. Suggestions: ask questions; consider the raising of your voice a failure.

TRAINING

[YPT](#) is required for all Scouters.

ASM training is ideal for a CC; consider taking these [two courses](#):

- ♣ NLE/Scoutmaster/Asst. Scoutmaster Leader Specifics
- ♣ Scoutmaster Outdoor Leader Skills (IOLS)

POLICY and REFERENCES WIKI

Essential policy for a CC to understand includes:

- ♣ [Sign-off policy](#)
- ♣ [Troop Uniform Policy](#)
- ♣ Troop roster
- ♣ Boy Scout Handbook

Methods and definitions that will help integrate your efforts as a CC are here:

- ♣ [Aims and Methods of Scouting](#) in New Parent Orientation
- ♣ [EDGE Method](#)
- ♣ [CampMaster's Guide](#)

Although the Committee Chair and ScoutMaster are already managing to the standards, a Scouter will develop increasing grasp of these references over the years:

- ♣ ScoutMaster's Handbook
- ♣ Colleyville FUMC policy
- ♣ [Guide to Safe Scouting \(GSS\)](#)

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