



LION PROGRAM PLAYBOOK

September 15, 2016





INTRODUCTION

In Scouting, we pride ourselves on providing unique, impactful experiences for our youth members in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and beyond. We tailor our programs to meet the needs of Scouting families, and we rely on the input we receive from parents, volunteers, and staff to ensure our programs reflect the types of experiences and activities kids want to enjoy.

In our 100-year history, we've served millions of youth members and their families. We've instilled the values of character development, leadership, personal fitness, and citizenship into the core of every activity and adventure. This year, in response to a need we witnessed in the Scouting community, we're launching a new pilot program to bring these core values to a new audience of kids – kindergarten-age boys.

The Lion program, launching in 198 local councils this fall, combines the primary Scouting concepts of leadership and character development with age-appropriate and fun activities for boys and their parents to experience as an introduction to the Scouting program. The Lion program offers 12 adventures for youth to enjoy that help them learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and sticking to what's right. We want to help parents build a strong foundation for their kids that complements an introduction to formal education and allows families to take an active role in their child's development.

Parents know they have a small window of time to make an impact on the type of adult their child will become. The Lion program curriculum was developed with input from parents across the country who expressed a desire to expose their children to activities and diverse experiences at an early age, while letting them have fun, try new things, and make friends.

We look forward to launching this pilot program within your local council this fall, and we've developed the following toolkit to assist you with promoting the Lion pilot within your community. We appreciate your help in reaching a new Scouting audience, and we thank you for your continued service in Scouting.

Yours in Scouting,

Mike

Michael Surbaugh
Chief Scout Executive





Reaching Key Audiences

You know your audiences best. To determine the best ways to enhance the launch of the Lion pilot program and generate media coverage in your community, included below are a few suggested tactics:

- **Compelling Stories.** The most compelling stories are those of families who have joined the Lion program and are excited to involve their kindergarten-age son in Scouting. Listen for unique stories or testimonials from parents, program coordinators or educators that can be shared with local media. Work closely with the parents to make sure they're comfortable sharing their family's story and keep them involved throughout the process.
- **Be Visual.** Whether it's a pitch for a local news reporter or a social media post, be visual by sharing videos and photos of Lion program materials or activities that bring the program to life.
- **Morning Shows.** Bring the Lion pilot program experience to a morning show by having a few families demonstrate activities and talk about their experience with the program.
- **Email.** Sharing compelling stories or updates via email can be a great way to inform parents and volunteers of the new program.
- **Website.** Freshly updated content keeps visitors coming back and helps keep your audiences informed. Be sure to post relevant content about the program on your council's website or blog.

Create a Media Contact List

You may already have an existing media list from which you work on a regular basis. If not, with a little research you can create one to aid you in pursuing media outreach across your market. Your media list should include all major daily and community newspapers in the area, along with local television news affiliates (ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, etc.), and talk radio stations/radio morning shows. Include those reporters and editors with whom you have an existing relationship and also round out the list to include:

- Community/metro reporters
- Education, specifically education-focused, reporters
- Youth development reporters
- News assignment editors

Reach Out With a Compelling Pitch

Use the opportunity to grab the reporter's or editor's attention with a brief but compelling pitch. *Why does this matter to the reporter? Why should they care? What does this have to do with the local community?* This is your opportunity to make the case for your story and why it should be considered.





We've included sample language in the resources section of this toolkit for your reference. You should feel free to personalize the pitch to your tone and voice as much as possible. This language is simply a starting point. Remember, be brief and keep it relevant.

Prepare Potential Interviewees

It will be important to identify Lion program coordinators, families, educators, council staff, and key volunteers who can be available for interviews should the reporter request it (they usually do). In advance of any interviews, make sure the spokespersons are familiar with the pillars of the program and can speak to it from a personal standpoint. To help you, there are key messages included for your review in the resources section. Note that adding personal tone to these messages will be important.

Make a Personal Connection with the Reporter

After your pitch has been sent to reporters, follow up via phone to make a personal connection and gauge any interest they may have in the story. At this time, you can reinforce the assets you have available.

Contact Us

From media interview preparations to issues support, the BSA National Media Support Team is here to help. Please reach out with questions or requests to the contact information included below.

National Media Support Team

Email: PR@scouting.org

Resources

On the following pages, you will find key documents and templates that will aid you in creating awareness about the Lion pilot program. These documents include:

- Key Messages
- Customizable News Release Template
- Customizable Media Pitch Template
- Talking Points
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Letter to Volunteers
- Letter to Parents





KEY MESSAGES

The Boy Scouts of America created the Lion Program, piloting this fall. The Lion program offers kindergarten-age boys (age 5) an introduction to the Scouting program through fun adventures and activities that build character and leadership and teach them about the world.

- The Lion program combines Scouting concepts of character development, leadership skills, personal fitness, and citizenship with age-appropriate and fun activities for boys and their parents.
- The Lion program offers 12 adventures for youth to enjoy that help them learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and sticking to what's right.
- Designed as a preview of the Cub Scouting program, the Lion program will fuel young children's imagination, creativity, and fun as they begin their Scouting journey. At the end of the Lion year, they "graduate" to Tiger and advance through Cub Scouting.
- Piloting in fall 2016, the Lion program is being offered in 198 councils, reaching more than 5,000 children.

The Lion program is one of the BSA's latest innovations to extend the life-changing experiences centered in adventure, leadership and character development to even more youth and their families. The Lion program complements the beginning of formal education and childhood development that takes place at this young age.

- The Lion Program was developed to supplement the learning and development boys experience at home and in an educational environment by introducing them to the values of Scouting.
- The Lion curriculum was developed by a team of experts, including representation from the fields of childhood development, education, and child psychology. The BSA worked to ensure the organization's high standards were met in delivering effective (age-appropriate) character and leadership programs.

As the nation's foremost program in youth development, Scouting builds a solid foundation of character, leadership, values, and education that stays with a child for a lifetime. Parents know there is a small window to make a meaningful, positive impact on children and shape who they may become as adults. The Lion program responds to parents' desires to expose their children to activities and diverse experiences at an early age.

- Forrester Research, Inc. found that Millennial parents are more likely to engage their children in after-school activities at a young age than older parents. (Source: *Forrester Research: August 2015 Omnibus Survey*)
- Forrester Research, Inc. found that nearly 30 percent of all parents have their children age 5 years or younger participate in an after-school activity.





- A Tufts University study of kids aged 6-12 found that youth who participate in Scouting for even a short period of time exhibit strong moral values and positive character attributes, allowing them to embrace new opportunities, overcome obstacles, and become better prepared for future success. ([Source](#))





LOCAL NEWS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Media Contact:

[Local Council contact]

[Phone number]

[Email address]

[LOCAL COUNCIL NAME] INTRODUCES LION PILOT PROGRAM FOR KINDERGARTEN-AGE BOYS IN [REGION]

Pilot Program Launches in 198 Councils Nationwide, including in [Region], to Introduce Younger Boys to Cub Scouting as More Parents Seek Wider Variety of Activities for Younger Boys

[City], [State] – (DATE) – Today, the [insert local council name], Boy Scouts of America (BSA), announced an innovative new pilot program called Lion that will introduce kindergarten-age boys and their families in [insert council coverage area] to Cub Scouting through fun adventures that build character and leadership and teach them more about the world around them. [Council name] is among 198 local councils nationwide participating in this pilot program in the fall. The new Lion pilot program will introduce families to the adventures available through Scouting and culminate for boys in the new Lion badge. Designed as an introduction to Cub Scouting, the Lion badge will serve as a precursor to the Tiger rank. The kindergarten-age boys participating in the program will be members of the Cub Scout pack; attend pack meetings; and learn the Cub Scout sign, the Cub Scout salute, and the Cub Scout motto.

The Lion pilot program responds to parents' desires to involve their kids in after-school programs that provide an environment for them to make friends, explore their surroundings, and further their learning and development. Research shows nearly one-third of all parents of children age five years or younger enroll their children in after-school activities where they can make friends, explore their surroundings, and further their learning and development. Millennial parents, in particular, are even more likely to engage their young children in after-school activities than older parents.¹ By engaging their children in Scouting, parents can instill in them a strong foundation for which to build their character. In fact, a study conducted by Tufts University found that youth who participate in Scouting exhibit positive character attributes, allowing them to embrace new opportunities, overcome obstacles, and become better prepared for future success.²

"Combined with the beginning of formal education, the Lion pilot program helps cultivate positive character-building experiences that are vital for young boys at this stage in their childhood development," said Michael Surbaugh, Chief Scout Executive, Boy Scouts of America. "We believe families nationwide

¹ Forrester Research, Inc. Omnibus Survey. (2015).

² Tufts University CAMP Study. (2015).





will see the value of this pilot program—and the value of Scouting—as it builds a solid foundation of character, leadership, values and education that stays with a child for a lifetime.”

As children progress through the pilot program, they will learn new skills by completing at least five of the 12 Lion adventures to earn the Lion badge. These adventures help children learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and making good choices. Once children complete these adventures, with the help of their parents and adult leaders, they will graduate to Tiger and advance through traditional Cub Scouting.

“The [insert local council], Boy Scouts of America, is proud to introduce this program to [insert area] families in fall 2016,” said [local council Scout Executive/spokesperson]. “By expanding the Scouting program to kids in kindergarten, we’re able to introduce them to the fun experiences of Scouting at an earlier age and help families understand more about what Scouting has to offer.”

For more information about the Lion pilot program, visit <http://scoutingwire.org/lion/>.

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About the Lion Pilot Program

Cub Scouting’s pilot program for kindergarten-age boys, the Lion pilot program, introduces families to the adventures and activities available through Scouting. Designed as an introduction to Cub Scouting, this pilot program is currently available in 198 local councils nationwide. Like other levels of Cub Scouting, Lion combines Scouting concepts of character development, leadership skills, personal fitness, and citizenship with age-appropriate and fun activities for young boys and their parents. For more information, visit <http://scoutingwire.org/lion/>.

About the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America provides the nation’s foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people be “Prepared. For Life.®” The Scouting organization is composed of nearly 2.4 million youth members between the ages of 7 and 21, and approximately 960,000 volunteers in local councils throughout the United States and its territories. For more information on the Boy Scouts of America, please visit www.scouting.org.





SAMPLE MEDIA PITCH EMAIL

Subject: [Local council name] Announces Lion Pilot Program for Kindergarten-Age Boys

Hi [Name],

With back-to-school season underway, the [insert council name], Boy Scouts of America, is launching an innovative pilot called the Lion program for kindergarten-age boys to experience Scouting.

Research shows nearly **one-third of all parents** of children age five years or younger enroll their children in after-school activities where they can make friends, explore their surroundings, and further their learning and development. Millennial parents are even more likely to engage their young children in after-school activities than older parents.

The new program, which launched this fall, is designed to give young boys (age 5) and their families in [insert council coverage area] an introduction to the fun adventures and activities available through Scouting and provide an opportunity for kids to make friends and explore the world around them, outside the classroom. The Lion program is a precursor to traditional Cub Scouting and helps families become involved with their child's development.

As children progress through the program, they will learn new skills by completing at least five of the 12 available Lion adventures to earn the Lion badge. These adventures help children learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and making good choices. Once children complete these adventures, with the help of their parents and adult leaders, they will graduate to Tiger and advance through traditional Cub Scouting.

More information about the program is included in the following news release. If you're interested in speaking with a representative from [insert council name], I'd be happy to connect you. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

[Signature]





EXTERNAL TALKING POINTS

Program Background

- Lion is a pilot program of the Boy Scouts of America designed to introduce kindergarten-age boys and their families to the adventures and activities available through Scouting.
- Piloting in fall 2016, the Lion program is being offered in 198 councils, reaching more than 5,000 children.
- The Lion program combines Scouting concepts of character development, leadership skills, personal fitness, and citizenship with age-appropriate and fun activities for boys and their parents.
- The Lion program offers 12 adventures for youth to enjoy that help them learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and making good choices.
- Because the Lion program combines Scouting ideals with different programmatic after-school activities, the BSA can reach a new population of young people who have never before been a part of the Scouting family.
- The Lion curriculum was developed by a team of experts, including representation from the fields of childhood development, education, and child psychology.
- The BSA worked to ensure the organization's high standards were met in delivering effective (age-appropriate) character and leadership programs.
- Designed as a preview of the Cub Scouting program, the Lion program will fuel young children's imagination, creativity, and fun as they begin their Scouting journey.

Making a Difference

- Parents know there is a small window to make a meaningful, positive impact on children and shape who they become as adults.
- The Lion program responds to parents' desires to expose their children to activities and diverse experiences at an early age.
- The Lion program was developed to supplement the learning and development boys experience at home and in an educational environment by introducing them to the values of Scouting.
- Forrester Research, Inc. found Millennial parents are more likely to engage their children in after-school activities at a young age than older parents.
- The same study also found nearly 30 percent of all parents have their children age 5 years or younger participate in an after-school activity.
- A study conducted by Tufts University of kids aged 6-12 found youth who participate in Scouting exhibit strong moral values and positive character attributes, allowing them to embrace new opportunities, overcome obstacles, and become better prepared for future success.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Lion program?

The Lion pilot program offers kindergarten-age boys and their families an introduction to the Scouting program through fun adventures and activities that build character and leadership and teach them more about the world around them. Piloting in fall 2016, the Lion program will be offered in 198 councils across the nation.

Why did you choose to launch this program?

The Lion pilot program was created in response to parents' desires to expose their children to activities and diverse experiences at an early age. Parents know there is a small window to make a meaningful, positive impact on children and shape who they become as adults. Scouting teaches the values of character development and leadership they can't find through any other after-school activity.

Who can join Lion?

The Lion program is open to kindergarten-age (age 5) boys in participating councils. The program is designed for parents to participate in activities and adventures with their child, taking an active role in their development.

Which councils will offer the Lion pilot program?

The Lion program will be offered in 198 councils across the nation. To find a local council offering the Lion program near you, visit http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/Participating_Councils.pdf.

How does this program complement traditional Scouting?

The Lion program is meant to serve as an introduction to Cub Scouting, with many similar activities and adventures, which were redesigned for kindergarten-age children.

How is the program structured? Do Lion program participants earn merit badges or achieve certain ranks?

The Lion program offers 12 adventures for youth to enjoy that help them learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and making good choices.

The Lion level will use immediate recognition stickers and a completion badge as a part of a fun introduction to Cub Scouting. Lions will begin their advancement trail and adventure belt loops when they begin working on the Bobcat rank in Tigers. At the end of the Lion year, they "graduate" to Tiger and advance through Cub Scouting.





When will this program be made available?

The Lion program will be piloting in 198 councils across the nation in fall 2016. The BSA National Council will provide program materials and support for its local councils that administer the Lion pilot program.

How can parents sign their son up for Lion?

The Lion program is open to kindergarten-age (age 5) boys. The program is designed for parents to participate in activities and adventures with their child, taking an active role in their development. To find a local council offering the Lion pilot program near you, visit http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/Participating_Councils.pdf.

Where can I find additional information?

For more information, visit <http://scoutingwire.org/lion/>.





LETTERS

Letter to Volunteers

Good [morning/afternoon/evening],

As you know, the Boy Scouts of America is constantly evolving to bring new, relevant programs and experiences to area youth and their families. For years, we've heard parents and volunteers across the nation express their desire for a program that offers kids the opportunity to participate in Scouting adventures and activities at a younger age.

In response to this need, the BSA is launching the Lion pilot program this fall in 198 local councils to bring the values of Scouting to more families nationwide. The Lion program offers kindergarten-age boys (age 5) an introduction to the Scouting program through fun adventures and activities that build character and leadership and teach them about the world around them.

Parents know there is a small window to make a meaningful, positive impact on children and shape who they become as adults. The Lion program responds to parents' desires to expose their children to activities and diverse experiences at an early age. As the nation's foremost program in youth development, Scouting builds a solid foundation of character, leadership, values, and education that stays with a child for a lifetime.

This is a tremendous leap for our organization as we work to provide activities kids want to do that complement the skills they are learning through formal education. This is an important age to reach kids as they begin to develop their character and shape their values. We can only make an impact on these families with the help of our many committed volunteers.

The Lion program presents a new way to get involved in our local council, and there are some exciting volunteer opportunities associated with this program. If this sounds like something you're interested in getting involved with, please contact [Name] at [contact information]. In the meantime, feel free to check out the [Lion program website](#) to learn more about the pilot.

Thank you for your continued service in Scouting.

Sincerely,

[Signature]





Letter to Parents

Good [morning/afternoon/evening],

As the nation's foremost program in youth development, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) builds a solid foundation of character, leadership, values, and education that stays with a child for a lifetime. The BSA is constantly evolving our programs to bring new, relevant programs and experiences to youth and families in [insert local council area]. For years, we've heard from parents across the nation who want to involve their kids in activities that help them make friends, learn new skills, and develop their character at a young age.

In response to this need, the Boy Scouts of America is launching the Lion pilot program this fall in 198 local councils to bring the values of Scouting to more families nationwide. The Lion program offers kindergarten-age boys (age 5) an introduction to the Scouting program through fun adventures and activities that build character and leadership and teach them about the world around them.

Designed as a preview of the Cub Scouting program, the Lion program will fuel young children's imagination, creativity, and fun as they begin their Scouting journey. The program offers 12 adventures for youth to enjoy that help them learn respect for their peers, the importance of family, building courage, and making good choices. At the end of the Lion year, they "graduate" to Tiger and advance through Cub Scouting.

You only have a small window of time to make a meaningful, positive impact on your child and shape who they become as adults. Scouting provides a unique opportunity to help children build a solid foundation of character, values, and education in a really fun environment. And the best part about the experience is it can be had as a family.

We encourage families to get involved with Scouting on some level as it provides a way to share inspiring adventures with your children while they're young. They'll also be able to witness firsthand the life-changing experiences had through Scouting from establishing lifelong friendships to learning how to care and give back to your community.

If this sounds like something your family would be interested in, please contact [Name] at [contact information]. In the meantime, feel free to check out the [Lion program website](#) to learn more about the pilot.

Thank you for your continued support of Scouting.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

