


Annual Pack Program Planning

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- **NEW!** [BSA - Pack Annual Program Planning Conference Guide \(PPTX\)](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/zip/BSA_Pack_Annual_Program_Planning_Conference_Guide.zip) 
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Your Pack's Annual Program Plan = Satisfied Cub Scouts and Families = A Lifelong Love of Scouting!

Dear Committee Chair and Cubmaster:

Let's talk about one of the key elements of all successful packs and an indicator of a potentially successful year. Of course that would be the pack's annual program plan and planning conference.

A research project done by Eli Lilly in Indianapolis, Indiana, showed that a common element of strong packs is they all have a good annual pack program planned a year in advance that is then shared with all families in the form of a calendar. The important result of a shared annual program calendar is that your pack will attract more families, and Cub Scouts will stay for a long time.


Just as an aside, the other two key elements of successful packs identified in that study were training and just having the right leader to start with.

Here is how a pack program planning conference works. A month or two before the scheduled face-to-face conference, the committee chair and Cubmaster gather the following information:

1. Key school dates
2. Community event dates
3. Your chartered organization's dates
4. Personal dates that may affect your pack's activities such as the Cubmaster's anniversary cruise
5. District and council dates
6. Collected Family Talent Survey sheets from all parents
7. Last year's pack annual plan if you have one

To maximize the efficiency of your planning, the following people should attend the conference:

1. All pack committee members
2. All den leaders
3. All pack/den aids and den chiefs (optional)
4. Chartered organization representative
5. Your unit commissioner (optional)
6. Anyone else you think might be helpful, such as other parents

If you choose, you can use a new electronic program planning conference guide for a pack to add some color to the process. This narrated PowerPoint presentation, which takes the pack step-by-step through the planning process, can be found by [clicking here](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/zip/BSA_Pack_Annual_Program_Planning_Conference_Guide.zip). 

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The result is an annual calendar and plan that all parties agree upon.

Here's a quick rundown of the steps.

Before you start the planning process: Explain to the group the importance of annual program planning, why you are doing it, and the rules for the process during this meeting.

Step 1: This part is easy. Just take the dates you collected and put them into your pack's master calendar—including den meeting dates—either on a hard copy or by plugging the information into an electronic calendar on a computer. An electronic template can be found by [clicking here](#).

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/CubScouts/Leaders/newslettertemplate.aspx>

Step 2: Before you begin rounding out the master calendar with things you want to do, review what the pack did last year. You might even want to write what you come up with on a flip chart or dry erase board. Ask yourself questions like, what events went well, what events didn't go so well? Did we earn the National Summertime Pack Award? The Journey to Excellence Award? How did we do with den and pack attendance? Did we participate in Cub Scout day camp or family camp? Did we sell popcorn? Feel free to ask as many questions as you want, but don't spend too much time on this, as the key issue is planning the upcoming year. Just use this research to help guide what you might want to keep, replace, or improve.

Step 3: Do some brainstorming on activities your pack might want to do in addition to den and pack meetings. This could be things such as a blue and gold banquet, pinewood derby, family picnic, first-aid training, pet show, and so on. Remember the brainstorming rule, which is anybody can suggest anything without critique or criticism. Feedback and analysis come later, after all the ideas have been captured. Once you have a list of things your dens and pack might want to do, start prioritizing the list. Is a particular activity something for dens or the pack as a whole? Could the activity be incorporated into a den or pack meeting? And so on.

Take a vote on which activities to include on the den and pack meeting schedule, then add the activities to your calendar.

Step 4: By now, the calendar should be taking shape. It should include school and community dates, holidays, some personal conflict dates, den and pack meetings, additional den and pack activities, and district and council dates. The next step is to assign the person who will be responsible for each event, as well as den responsibilities at pack meetings. This would include names, like "Bob Smith" will be the chair for the blue and gold banquet.

If you are really ambitious, you can even put in event details such as, "Bob will send invitation and assignments to each family by January 1," and, "By November 1, we will get confirmation from the school we can use the cafeteria." Remember that good planning and preparation will lead to family satisfaction. Some of this might have to come after your program planning conference, if you choose activities now and have to recruit chairs later. However, if you know you will be doing some activities again such as your blue and gold banquet, you might already have a commitment from "Bob" by the time the program planning conference happens.

Step 5: You're almost finished. The final step is to review your annual plan to ensure you have captured everything you and your families want to do in the upcoming year. Once you feel comfortable, publish or email your annual plan to each family. A reminder that not everyone has an email account, so be sure your distribution reaches all families. They will feel much more a part of your pack and be able to plan their own family calendar with the pack's calendar in hand. Sharing the annual plan with your families could be the most important step in retaining your Scouts and building tenure, so don't shortcut this one.

Step 6: Annual program planning is an ongoing process. Review the plan each month at your pack leaders' meeting to make sure you are still on track, to recruit chairs and other help, you participate in important meetings, or to make assignments or changes as needed.

A great pack program plan leads to a great pack and den program, which leads to Cub Scouts and their families staying and growing in Scouting.

Good luck! You are taking a big step toward being a great pack!

Resources

These tools should make it easier to have up-to-date newsletters and calendars ready when you need them.


Pack calendar templates  (2013-2014)

<http://scouting.org/filestore/cubscouts/xls/2013-2014PackPlanningCalendar.xls>

Pack calendar templates  (2014-2015)

http://scouting.org/filestore/xls/14-15_Pack_Calendar.xls

Fill in dates and events in the spaces provided. Save and print or email. It's that easy! When you first know about an addition or change to pack activities, add that to the calendar so it will always be up-to-date and ready to print or send.

Pack newsletter template (Excel)  <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/xls/13-288nws.xls> Save the template file, then "Save As" for your first newsletter. This file includes two worksheets (see tabs at the bottom of the screen). Enter the information you want in the newsletter in the "Type Information Here" worksheet. Save the file. Then go to the "View&Print Newsletter" tab to see if the newsletter is as you want it to be. Make any changes on the "Type Information Here" worksheet.* When the newsletter is as you want it, save the file and then print it. If you plan to email the file, first delete the "Type Information Here" worksheet so that the recipients will get only the "View&Print Newsletter."

***Note:** The worksheets are protected without a password to allow changes only in certain cells and prevent mistakes. To learn how to change those protected cells in your version of Microsoft Excel®, search for "protection" in the Excel help section. We recommend that after you make the intended changes, you protect the worksheet to prevent unintended changes.

Pack poster templates.

- [Letter-Size Poster \(8.5" x 11"\)](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-045_ltr_WB.pdf) 
- [Tabloid-Size Poster \(11" x 17"\)](http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/512-045_tab_WB.pdf) 

NEW! BSA - Pack Annual Program Planning Conference Guide (PPTX)

http://www.scouting.org/filestore/membership/zip/BSA_Pack_Annual_Program_Planning_Conference_Guide.zip

Family Talent Survey

<http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx>

Cub Scout Den Meeting Program

<http://www.scouting.org/sitecore/content/Home/CubScouts/Leaders/Forms.aspx>

Den and Pack Meeting Resource Guide

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsources/CubScouts/Leaders/DenLeaderResources/DenandPackMeetingResourceGuide.aspx>

Boys' Life Planning Calendar

<http://www.scouting.org/magazines/BoysLifePromo.aspx>


Boys' Life Resources Page

<http://www.scouting.org/magazines.aspx>

Pack Budget Planning

[Planning Your Pack's Annual Program Budget](#) 

Pack Operating Budget Worksheet [PDF](#)  | [Excel](#) 

[Guides to Unit Money-Earning Projects](#) 

Training Courses

<http://www.scouting.org/Training/YouthProtection/CubScout.aspx>

Cub Scout Leader Book, No. 33221, pages 85–95, 168