



Engaging families and our local communities

Local Scout groups, just like NSOs, are not on an island, they are embedded and part of a local community and a social fabric. Because, in Scouting we want young people to achieve their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potentials as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their **local, national and international communities** we need our groups to engage their local communities and families. Involving them will allow local groups to deliver an even better programme and keep recruiting new members!

“How can we help?”

Before groups start to identify who in their community could help, they first need to know what they want help with. When we ask anyone for help, if they are willing and able to help us, the first thing they will want to know is “How can we help, what help do you need”? Our groups need to be able to answer this quickly and clearly! Before they explore who is in their community, they need to ask (and discuss as a group) ...what exactly do they want help with?

Who or what is ‘our local community’?

In short, it is all the people, families, friends, organisations, businesses, local and regional governments, religious groups, other youth groups who operate in the same municipality your groups do. It is essential for your Scout groups to understand that they evolve in an environment where other actors are involved. To raise this awareness, you could encourage your groups to take their young people on a walk around their community, take a good look at what is out there, and think about how their wider community might be able to help and influence them. Also encourage your current volunteers to discuss who they know **outside** of Scouting who might be able to help. When thinking about different people or organisations they might ask for help from, first they need to ask themselves six key questions:

1. Who are we going to approach?
2. Why are we approaching them?
3. How could they help us?
4. How do we get in touch with them?
5. Who is the best person in Scouting to contact them?
6. How do we motivate them to get involved?

The last question is particularly important. Everyone is busy, and it is really easy for people to say no, so your groups will need to think of great reasons to persuade family and community members to get involved. What will attract them to support you? Is it about having fun, lighting fires, camping and other experiences? Or is it about sharing their professional expertise, providing help to others, supporting their child’s education, or simply contributing back to the community?

Help from the local community

Quite often, when asking for help from businesses, organisations and other charities in our community, this help tends to be for a fixed period of time and is a great way to support delivering part of our programme. Perhaps a local business can organise a visit to their factory or office to see how a product is made, a local faith leader could organise a visit to their mosque, church, temple, or synagogue, or someone from another charity can come to your groups and explain what they do. A business might want to provide money, spaces to meet, transport, equipment, connections to other people and act as an advocate or champion for your groups. Some people will want to use their professional skills and expertise, and some will want to do something totally different from their job. It’s important that your groups listen to what people want to offer, the time they have to commit, and how comfortable they feel, and then think about how they can make the best use of this in their group. Ensure your groups never try



to force people to do things they don't want!

Help from families

Having families involved in Scouting is good for everyone, studies have shown that parents actively involved in their children's education helps young people develop confidence and empathy for others. It also helps parents to want to contribute to the success of the local Scout group because they feel part of it. After a year of Scouting from home, many parents truly understand the impact of great non-formal education and the difference Scouting makes in the lives and wellbeing of their children. And it is another opportunity for parents to witness their children develop. Different family members can get involved in many different group activities, such as:

- Helping run, or take part in activity days and group events
- HQ 'clean up' and other working days
- Helping with traditional Scout activities like fire lighting and backwoods cooking
- Participating in community and faith events like bring a dish Iftar
- Participating in family camps and helping with activities, catering, logistics or transport
- Handling administration and paperwork
- Reviewing finance and governance
- Managing property and equipment

Parents and families are the easiest groups to engage with. Your groups see or speak to them most weeks, they have a strong understanding of their Scouting activities, share a vested interest in seeing your groups delivering great Scouting and hopefully they already have a good relationship with them. Groups can invite parents to get involved with one off events like the ones above, or they could invite them to a parents evening and discuss with them about getting involved in the long term. If groups are going to run a parents' evening it should include:

- What are the advantages of volunteering, what do we get out of it?
- How do we benefit young people?
- How easy it is to get involved with Scouting?
- How will we support and train them?
- How can they help and the help we need?
- How long is their volunteer engagement capacity?
- What are the mutual expectations?
- What can parents get involved in and what not?

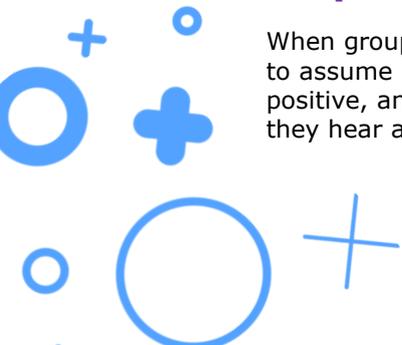
Family camps are another great way to get parents and families involved. Parents get to see first-hand how young people enjoy time away, and the impact our volunteers have. They also get to experience fun themselves, and that is a key part of getting families involved. **It needs to be fun for them too!**

Scout Alumni

A third group of people to consider are former Scouts who left or took a break from Scouting. These might be the family of your groups' current members, or other members of your groups' local community. These should be the easiest group of people to get involved as they already know Scouting and have clearly been interested in the past. Groups should ask existing volunteers which Scout alumni are in their community, find out why they left, and see if there is anything you can do to persuade them back!

Be positive and keep at it!

When groups speak to members of their community, often for the first time, it is easy for them to assume no one is going to volunteer to help. Remind them to keep an open mind, remain positive, and remember that they might have to hear 10, 20 or maybe even 30 "nos" before they hear a "yes!" but that's ok! It's important they revisit this process often, at least once

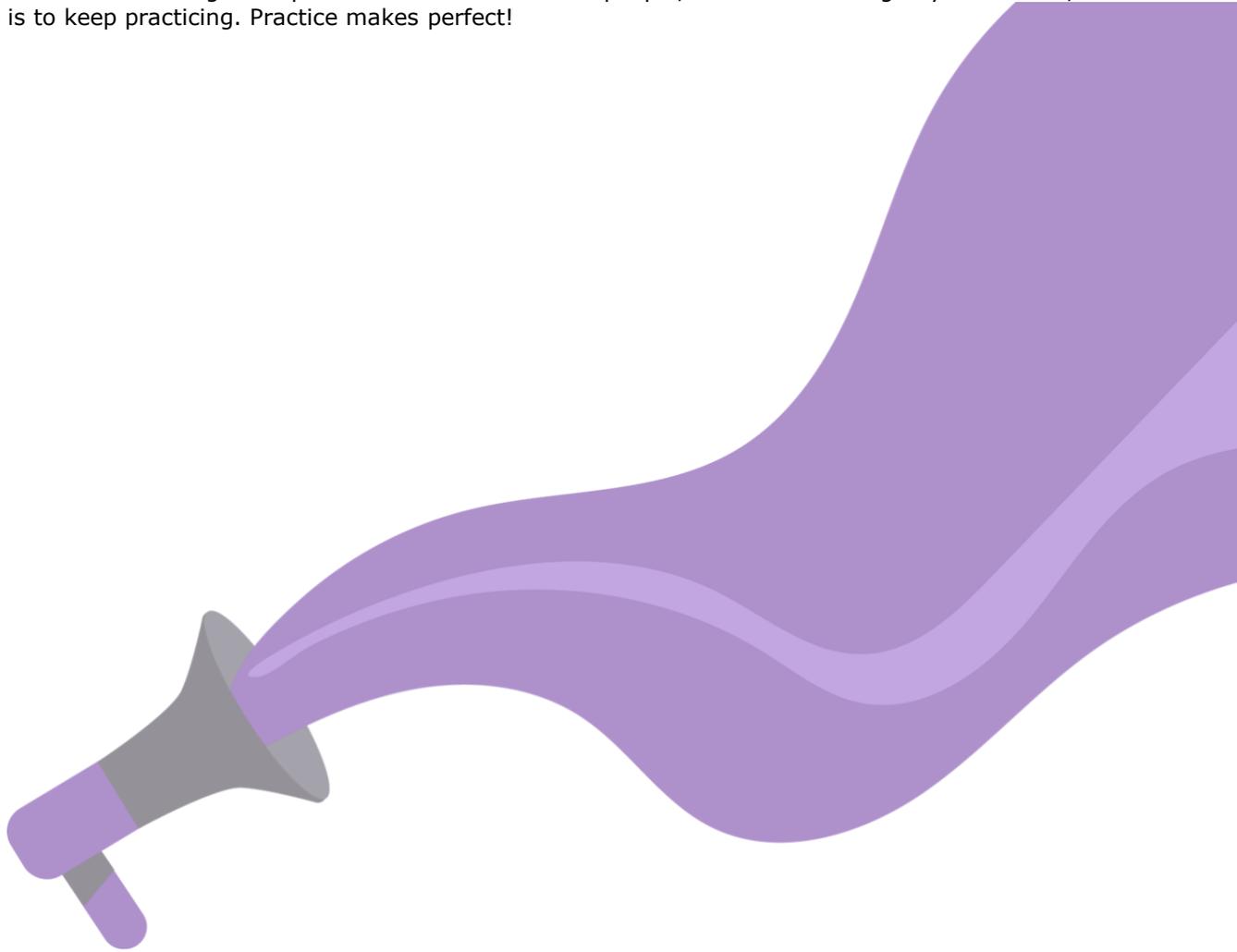




SCOUTS[®]
Creating a Better World

World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout
Всемирная Организация Скаутского Движения
Organización Mundial del Movimiento Scout
المنظمة العالمية للحركة الكشفية

annually to continually seek out new volunteers for their groups. If they don't have any luck recruiting from their local community, they could consider specific recruitment, engagement or even sales training to help them connect better with people, but the best thing anyone can do, is to keep practicing. Practice makes perfect!





SCOUTS[®]
Creating a Better World

World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout
Всемирная Организация Скаутского Движения
Organización Mundial del Movimiento Scout
المنظمة العالمية للحركة الكشفية