



Open House Conversation Guide

About This Guide

This guide is designed to support you—Scouters, Group Commissioners, and volunteers—during open houses and community events. Whether you're welcoming new families or speaking with curious visitors, this guide will help you:

- Start confident, friendly conversations about volunteering
- Explain how volunteering helps open program spots for youth
- Share the benefits of getting involved
- Answer common questions with ease
- Guide interested adults through the next steps

You don't need to memorize everything—just be yourself, share your personal Scouting story, and use this guide as a reference. Every conversation you have helps build a stronger, more inclusive Scouting program.

Let's help more youth experience the adventure of Scouting—one volunteer at a time.

Engaging Parents at Open Houses (Waitlisted Families)

Goal: Help families understand that volunteering is the key to opening new spots for youth, including their own child—and that it's a rewarding and flexible way to be involved in their child's experience.

Your Role at the Event

- Create an environment where families feel welcome, informed, and inspired
- Share your personal Scouting story and enthusiasm for the program
- Help parents see how they can get involved—without pressure



Be Approachable

- Smile and make eye contact
- Use open, friendly body language
- Wear your Scouting necker and uniform or branded logo wear shirt
- Be visible and available for conversation, but not overbearing

Breaking the Ice & Building Rapport

- Ask: "How did you hear about this event?" or "What brought you out today?" or "Have you been connected to Scouts before?"
- Listen actively and mirror interests
- Share a short story: "Why I'm glad I became a Scouter"
- Mention how Scouting helped your relationship with your child (if applicable)

Conversation Starters:

- "Thanks for coming - interest in Scouting has been incredible this year!"
- "We have youth on waitlists, and the only thing stopping us from opening more spots is finding the right kind of volunteers who are open to learning and helping."
- "Have you ever thought about volunteering? That's how many of our Scouters got started—just like you."

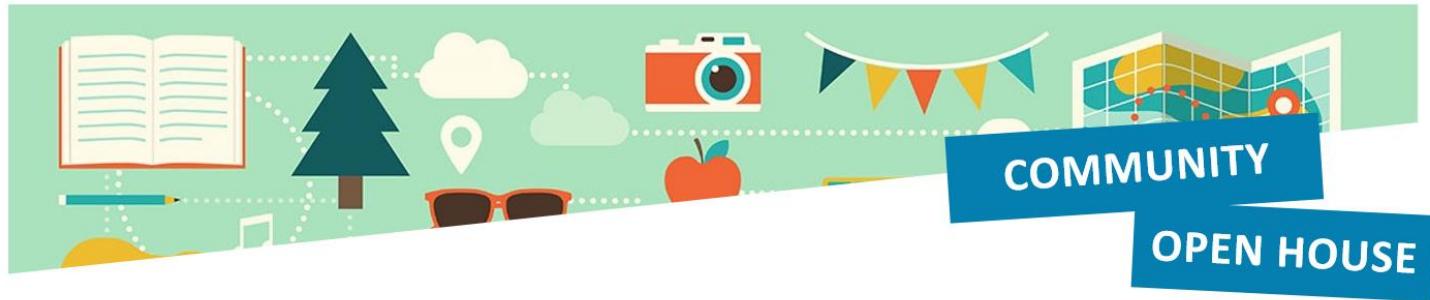
Benefits to Highlight:

For the parent or guardian:

- Help open a space for their child and others
- Spend meaningful, active time together especially in nature
- Build friendships and community connections
- Learn leadership, planning, and outdoor skills
- Flexible roles—can be shared with a partner or friend

For their child:

- See their parent involved in something meaningful and learning and growing along with them
- Create shared memories through unique Scouting adventures
- Feel proud of their parent's contributions, support and involvement



Dos & Don'ts

Do say:

- "There's lots of support and it's surprisingly fun."
- "I had no experience either when I first started!"
- "I love the quality time I get to spend with my kid."

Don't say:

- "We desperately need help in order to keep running!"
- "It's a lot of work."
- "You'd be perfect!"
- "It's just an hour a week."

Common Concerns & Responses:

- "I don't have any experience with Scouting."

That's totally okay—most of us started the same way. Scouts Canada provides great training, and you'll always be part of a team. You won't be doing this alone.

- "I'm already stretched thin with work and family."

We understand. That's why we offer flexible roles. Even helping once or twice a month or supporting behind the scenes can make a big impact.

- "I'm not sure I'd be good at it."

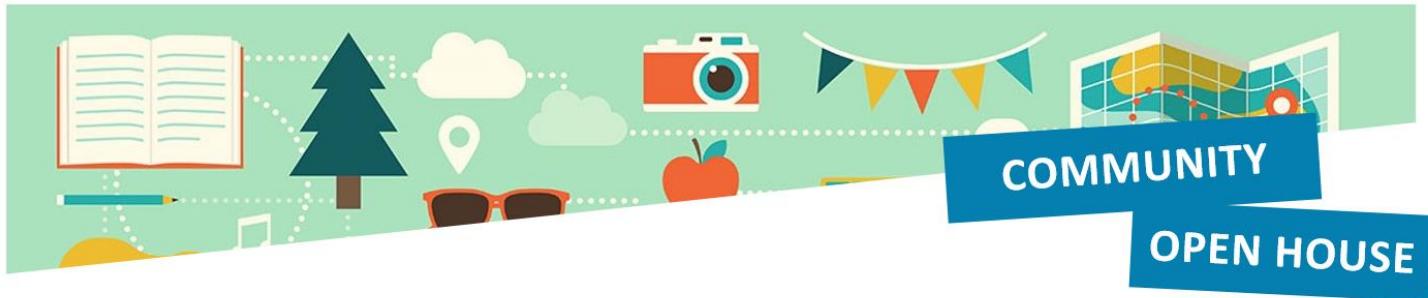
You'd be surprised! Whether it's organizing, storytelling, hiking, or just being a steady presence, there's a role for everyone. We'll help you find the right fit.

- "I'd rather just help occasionally at events."

That's a great start, and we appreciate all help. But to open new spots for youth, we need consistent volunteers. Even a small, regular commitment helps us grow.

Next Steps:

- Invite them to consider a Scouter role
- Collect their contact information and interests in volunteering
- Offer to send them new volunteer onboarding screening and training details
- Invite them to an information session or to audit/observe a meeting prior to registering
- Suggest sharing a volunteer role with a friend or family member



Printable Resource: Open House Volunteer Conversations Card

(Print double-sided)

Scouter's Guide: Talking to Prospective Parents & Volunteers

Thank you for helping introduce new volunteers to Scouting! Here's a quick guide for your conversations.

Key Messages:

- Make a difference in young lives through Scouting.
- No experience needed—just enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.
- Training & support provided to ensure confidence.
- Flexible roles available to fit any schedule.
- Meeting days & times will be decided on based on availability of all involved (Scouters, GC, families, and location).
- **A minimum of 4 volunteers are required to open each new section.**

Volunteer Screening Process:

1. Register on myScouts: Create an account and apply.
2. Interview: A conversation to ensure it's the right fit.
3. References: Provide 5 references (that aren't family) during registration.
4. Background Check: Required for safety. In person is the quickest.
5. Code of Conduct: Sign to commit to Scouts Canada's policies & procedures.
6. Training: Complete orientation and training.



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Common Questions & Responses:

What is Scouting?

A youth-led program teaching leadership, outdoor skills, and teamwork.

Who can volunteer?

Anyone 14+ with a desire to support youth.

What would I do as a volunteer?

- Lead activities
- Plan outdoor adventures
- Mentor and guide youth

How much time is required?

Flexible options—from a few hours to more regular involvement.

I don't have experience with kids—can I still volunteer?

Yes! We provide training and support.

How do I sign up?

An email will be sent after the Open House(s) with a link to Register on MyScouts

Tips for Engaging Parents & Volunteers:

- Share your story about why you volunteer.
- Highlight benefits for both youth and volunteers.
- Be approachable—keep the conversation relaxed and open.