

Parent Handbooks

1st Summerside – PEI Council & 1st Blueberry – Northern Lights Council

Critical Shift: Parents have informed and realistic expectations which our Groups and Sections have the capability to consistently deliver.

Our Story:

1st Summerside was facing the challenge of parents not knowing who to contact with questions or concerns, or how to prepare their child for activities each week. Youth arriving unprepared for the weather for instance sometimes made the program more difficult for Section Scouters to deliver. 1st Blueberry was facing similar challenges. In addition, parents were confused by Scouting language, and important information from initial Parent Nights was forgotten resulting in Scouters having to answer the same questions repeatedly. Parents felt hesitant to ask too many questions, which left youth unprepared for Scouting camps and activities.

The Problem:

Scouters faced repetitive questions based on activities and seasons, and parents were often hesitant to ask too many questions. There was confusion regarding contact information and appropriate points of contact, leading to youth arriving unprepared for meetings which hindered Scouters' ability to deliver effective programming. Additionally, not everyone was familiar with commonly used Scouting terms and phrases.

Our Solution:

1st Summerside and 1st Blueberry created Parent Handbooks which are available to parents of each respective Group. The Parent Handbook contents vary slightly to suit each Group, but they both achieve the same great results: informed parents who have a resource which ensures they know Group information and contacts, and how their child can arrive prepared for Scouting activities.

How It Works:

When Groups have a Parent Handbook to equip parents with at the beginning of the year, the handbook demonstrates a well-organized, informed and engaged community, enhancing the overall Scouting experience for both the youth and their families. Every Group is unique, so Parent Handbooks contain relevant information for each respective Group.



What Success Looked Like:

New parents frequently express their appreciation for having access to information they can review at their convenience. This preparation allows youth to arrive ready for activities, making it easier for Scouters to deliver quality programs. Providing information ahead of time reduces anxiety prior to camps or special activities. Additionally, efficient communication ensures parents know who in the Group they can contact.



Parent Handbooks

1st Summerside – PEI Council & 1st Blueberry – Northern Lights Council

Give it a Try!

Step-by-Step

1. As a Group, decide what information should go in the Parent Handbook.
2. Gather the information; this can include:
 - Names, roles, email addresses, and phone numbers
 - Meeting times and locations
 - Important dates
 - Dress code requirements
 - How each youth can arrive prepared
 - The words to songs and cheers
 - Scouting Terminology or Glossary
3. Draft, organize and format the content.
4. Proofread the content. Circulate the draft for feedback, edits, and corrections. Set a realistic timeline for this process.
5. Circulate the handbook to all new Scouting families at the first parent information meeting. A physical copy isn't necessary, as long as the families are informed where a virtual copy and the information can be found.
6. Seek feedback from parents and Scouters throughout the year.
7. Adjust and edit the handbook annually.
8. Enjoy the benefits of well-informed parents who have consistent information at their fingertips, and youth who are well-prepared for every Scouting meeting, activity and adventure!



Tips & Tricks

- Click [here](#) to see 1st Blueberry and 1st Summerside's Parent Handbooks as a starting point.
- Set a deadline for feedback.
- Enjoy the process of customizing your handbook to reflect the unique aspects of your Group!

What Do I Need?

- A computer or smart device with a word processing application.
- A comprehensive understanding of your Group operations. This is where teamwork makes the dream work and many hands make light work.
- You'll need to think like a parent; what they would like to know, what they need to know, what questions most frequently arise, etc.

Provide your feedback on this Trail Card by clicking [HERE](#)
E-mail your own Scouter Solution to: BetterPrograms@Scouts.ca

