



Help develop well-rounded youth, better prepared for success in the world.

10 Steps to Welcoming New Youth from Your Waitlist

Bringing new youth into your Scouting Group from your youth waitlist is a great opportunity to build a strong, inclusive community! Here are some tips to ensure a smooth and positive transition for everyone:

1. Reach Out Before Their First Meeting

- **Welcome Message:** Send a personal email or call the family to welcome them. Include photos of each Scouter with a brief bio to give the youth familiar faces to make their first day as easy and natural as possible.
- **Info Email:** Share key information (meeting times, uniform details, expectations).
- **Buddy System Intro:** Let them know they'll be paired with a buddy when they arrive.

2. Assign a Buddy

- Choose a friendly, responsible youth to act as a buddy to the new youth for the first few meetings.
- The buddy can:
 - Introduce them to others
 - Explain activities and traditions
 - Stick with them during games and group work

3. Start with a Warm Welcome

- Announce their arrival to the group and do a round of introductions of the whole Section.
- Consider an icebreaker game or team challenge that helps new and current youth mix naturally.

4. Keep Them Engaged Early

- Involve them right away by giving them a specific role during activities.
- Introduce the Group or Section's Code of Conduct. This is a great refresher for the rest of the Section too.
- Offer simple, meaningful ways to contribute.

5. Check In with Parents/Guardians

- After the first couple of meetings, check in with the youth's parents/guardians to ask how the youth is feeling.
- Be open to feedback and share any highlights from their participation.

6. Foster a Culture of Inclusion

- Encourage all youth to be welcoming and inclusive.
- Celebrate big and small successes and new friendships formed.

7. Give Them Time to Settle

- It may take a few meetings for new youth to fully engage – and that's okay! Be sure to confidentially check in.
- Provide consistent routines and clear expectations.

9. Mentor New Families, Too

- Consider a "parent buddy" system to guide new families through logistics.
- Invite them to volunteer in small ways to help them feel connected. They may want to become a Scouter!

10. Gather Feedback

- After a month or so, ask the youth and their parents/guardians how things are going. See the "Parent Feedback Sample Questionnaire" resource for guidance on questions to ask.
 - Use feedback to refine your integration process for future new youth!
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