

BSA Den Chief – Duties and Responsibilities

What is a den chief?

A Den Chief is an older scout (minimum First Class Rank) who assists a Cub Scout or Webelos Scout den leader at den meetings, pack meetings, and other events. He is the “Activities Assistant” for a Cub Scout den or Webelos Scout patrol. His role is to work with the den leaders and help the scouts complete their Cub Scout or Webelos Scout advancement requirements and live up to Cub Scouting's ideals in their everyday lives. The den chief is a member of a leadership team that includes the den leader, assistant den leader, and the Denner. He is already what every Cub Scout and Webelos Scout would like to be – a Boy Scout. As far as the younger boys are concerned, he is the person they would most like to follow, and that makes the older scout a natural leader for them. A den chief can be an older male from a Boy Scout Troop, Venture Crew or Varsity Team or an older female youth from a Venture Crew.

Why is a den chief important to the Cub and Boy Scout Program?

The den chief is a key means of building relationships between the pack and troop, crew or team. The den chief regularly reminds the boys about Boy Scouts in a positive way as he/she leads activities and shares their enthusiasm for Scouting with the Cub Scouts. Their presence adds another important asset: they can tell them all about Boy Scouting, with its outdoor activities, trips, summer camp, and opportunities for advancement. When it's time for them to move up to a Webelos Scout patrol or a Boy Scout troop, a den chief's positive example and encouragement can help them decide to make that transition.

Where do den chiefs come from?

- A Boy Scout Troop, Venture Crew or Varsity Team.
- It is best if he has attended a council, district or troop sponsored den chief training course.
- An Assistant Scoutmaster of Den Chiefs or a District Den Chief Trainer can assist a Cubmaster or den leader with obtaining a den chief.

Does a Boy Scout earn anything for being a trained den chief?

- Leadership practice, organization and communication skills and responsibility!!!
- A Boy Scout may use the den chief position as a means to help him fulfill specific leadership requirements needed for rank advancement.
- The Den Chief Service Award if he fulfills all requirements as detailed in the Den Chief Handbook.

How long does a den chief stay with the den?

- Your den chief should look at his role as being a one year commitment.
- You might want to speak with him early on about this commitment to see what he is willing to commit to. Many Boy Scout Troops elect their leaders every 6 months, so the den chief job is unusual in that regard. But the Boy Scout can get credit towards his rank for each 6 month term that he serves as a den chief.

What is a trained den chief responsible for?

- Set a good example by having a positive attitude and behaving in a proper and respectful manner that reflects the Scout Law and the Scout Oath. ☑ Treat each boy with respect, sensitivity, and fairness.
- Know the purposes of Cub Scouting, and help the boys to achieve them.
- Arrive on time and prepared to start.
- Wear the BSA Boy Scout uniform completely and correctly. (His troop will present him with the Den Chief Badge and "Trained" patch that he is to wear).
- Be an "Activity Assistant" for the den: Lead and/or assist with the specific activities the den leader requested the den chief to prepare for.
- Assist with set-up, song/skit/ceremony rehearsal and any pre-assigned den activities at the monthly pack meetings.
- Participate in consistent communication with the den leader so the den chief's responsibilities for the den and pack meetings are clearly understood, prepared and organized.
- Recognize and work with the Denner as his right-hand man by giving the Denner opportunities to serve.
- Encourage Cub Scouts to become Webelos.
- Encourage Webelos to become Boy Scouts.

What a den chief is NOT responsible for:

- A den chief is NOT ANOTHER CUB SCOUT. It is the den leader's responsibility to ensure the den chief does not become just another one of the boys in the Cub Scout den. It is important that he not be seen as a competitor to the Cubs and Webelos. If anything, he is more like a big brother than a fellow den member.
- A den chief is NOT A DENNER. The reasons why the positions of Denner and assistant Denner exist are to give the Cubs and Webelos a chance to experience some of their own leadership tasks. If a den chief begins to take over the role of the Denner then the boys in the den are losing a great chance to learn some new people skills.
- A den chief is NOT A BABYSITTER. Keep Youth Protection Guidelines in mind at all times...a den chief should not be left to run an activity or discussion without an adult within sight. A den chief does not fulfill the "trained adult over the age of 18" requirement on a Tour Permit or Guide to Safe Scouting!
- A den chief is NOT AN ADULT. They should not be given the role of den or assistant den leader. Their job is to be the Activities Leader at meetings.
- They are NOT THE DISCIPLINARIAN...all discipline is the responsibility of the adults!