Marketing, Inviting & Recruiting Families into Scouting

The following pages detail a variety of recruiting methods your unit should utilize to ensure EVERY eligible family receives an effective invitation to join Scouting. These are customizable to your community and level of school access. The North Florida Council is prepared to support your efforts with the needed materials & resources in order to support a meaningful recruitment effort for your unit that allows for continued growth & sustainability of local Scouting programming. Items 1, 2/3/4, 5, 6 will be deployed by the NFC through your Executive/District-level Volunteer:

FAMILIES WILL JOIN SCOUTING AT A VERY HIGH RATE IF PARENTS FEEL THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ADEQUATELY INVITED TO JOIN. THEREFORE, EACH UNIT MUST EMPLOY AT LEAST 5 DIFFERENT INVITATION METHODS TO ENSURE THAT EVERY FAMILY IS ACTUALLY INVITED TO JOIN SCOUTING.

1. Facebook Geofencing
Advertisements are generated on Facebook to Scouting’s target market within a geographic radius of the local school promoting attendance at a local sign up night or registration directly to [www.beascout.org](http://www.beascout.org). This advertisement is being coordinated through BSA National to run the 2 weeks leading into the sign up night.

2. Classroom visitations to invite students
This is THE most effective recruitment method! Your local Executive coordinates a visit to the school 1-2 days in advance of the sign up night to speak with students via 2-3 minute presentations in classrooms about the fun & adventure Scouting has to offer. Flyers are distributed at that time to all students grades K-5 to take home to their parents.

3. School assembly
Your local Executive coordinates a visit to the school 1-2 days in advance of the sign up night to speak with students about the fun & adventure Scouting has to offer at an assembly in the cafeteria, auditorium or other large room. Flyers are distributed at that time to all students grades K-5 to take home to their parents.

4. Morning announcements
Your local Executive coordinates the airing of a 2-3 minute “commercial” that shares the fun & adventure of Scouting with students in the local school. This is aired on the school’s closed-circuit TV 1-2 days in advance of the sign up night to all students.

5. Flyer distribution in schools
Your local Executive coordinates a flyer drop at the school to be distributed to the students in their classrooms by teachers. Flyers should be printed & stapled in “sets” so they can be delivered easily to classrooms/teacher mailboxes. Be sure to check with students in the school to ascertain if the flyers were actually distributed. This should be done at the beginning of the school year so flyers are included in “1st-day packets.” Additionally, if no school access to students is available, flyers can be distributed again 2-3 days in advance of a sign up night.

6. Yard signs with recruitment event information
Yard signs with information including School Night date, time & location. Each school is allotted 2 yard signs; additional signs may be available through your Executive to place at alternative locations (high traffic area, charter partner, etc) but be aware of any regulations. Signs are recommended to be placed 3-7 days in advance of the sign up night. The NFC will provide the yard signs.
7. **Personal invitations to prospective members from current Scouts/Parents (Ask-A-Friend Recruitment)**

Word of mouth is one of the most powerful and lasting forms of advertising. The best recruiters are our current youth & family members. Have each Scout hand out four joining invitations to friends not already enrolled in Scouting. They should be distributed in the same manner as birthday party invitations & include the name of the invitee, the name and phone number of the Scout inviting them, the information on the sign up night & contact information for the unit’s leadership. Each Scout who recruits a friend will receive a patch from NFC. NFC will provide sample invitation templates, which should be distributed 3-5 days in advance of the sign up night.

8. **Back-to-School/curriculum night/meet the teacher table displays**

Every school has a back-to-school night/curriculum night/meet the teacher event in early fall. Each unit should coordinate with the school and/or PTO/PTA to secure a table for display and information distribution at these events. Be sure to make the display catchy and interesting, with emphasis on the fun and exciting activities are taking place each month of the year. Bringing giveaway items, having a “tactile” display (ie pinewood derby cars, camp stove, etc) and/or photo slideshow of activities are highly effective. Have flyers for parents to take home with them that showcase your sign up night date along with a unit info sheet detailing your calendar, leader info & meeting schedule. Additionally, you can have a sign-in sheet for families who want more information that you can use to drive attendance to the sign up night or parent orientation. The NFC can print flyers & unit info sheets & provide sign in sheets.

9. **Presence at Community Events & Spaces**

The unit can set up an information booth (similar to the school visual demonstration option), put up flyers, volunteer/do community service at back-to-school neighborhood events, markets, fall festivals, parks & recreational department (parks, public pools, etc). Displays can be placed in malls, storefronts, or restaurants. All attendees should wear a Scout t-shirt/unit t-shirt with leaderships wearing the Scouting uniform to make them more easily identifiable so they can be easily found to answer questions. This should take place in conjunction (within 7-10 days) of your sign up night – or afterwards as a “clean-up” effort. Support materials such as flyers, posters, banners & sign-in sheets can be provided by the NFC.

10. **Charter partner advertisement**

Speak with the person in charge of the newsletter/community partnerships/youth groups/religious education class to find out how and when to submit an article, announcement or flyer. Be sure to include information that will attract the readers’ attention while also sharing logistic information regarding your unit. Have these announcements run 1-2 weeks in advance of your sign up night. The NFC can provide flyers.

11. **Personal social media posts from unit families**

Word-of-mouth is one of the most powerful and lasting forms of advertising. Current Scout families should post a photo or video of their family participating in a Scouting activity & include 1-2 sentences highlighting a recent activity, their Scout’s most fun activity, proudest moment, upcoming event or why you are involved in Scouting & the difference it’s made for your family. Leverage personal relationships & connections through platforms such as (but not limited to) Text groups, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc. These posts should take place 1-3 days in advance of the sign up night. Templates & stock photos will be made available from NFC.

12. **Social media posts to community pages (Nextdoor, Community PTO/PTA/School)**

Online social media is a powerful way to reach a large group of people quickly and cheaply. Leverage families with reach and connections within their local neighborhood community pages, PTO/PTA/school pages, etc to post information about your upcoming sign up night. These posts should take place 1-3 days in advance of the sign up night. Templates & stock photos will be made available from NFC.
13. **Current Scouts and leaders wearing their uniforms or unit t-shirt to school**
Wearing the uniform or Scout t-shirt is like a walking billboard, and can grab the attention of youth and adults. The uniform is a great way to show the presence of Scouting in your community and spread the excitement. Coordinate all members of the unit to wear Scouting-related items on a pre-set day that is 1-2 days in advance of the sign up night.

14. **Individual invitation postcards to eligible families**
Work through your District Executive to have a mailer sent to all families of Scouting age in your school’s geography inviting them to a sign up night. A date, time, location, point of contact & their email & phone number are needed for inclusion with the mailer. A 4-week lead time from your sign up night date is needed if you want to utilize this option, which the NFC will coordinate & mail on the unit’s behalf.

15. **Visual demonstration at schools**
Pinewood derby track & cars or mock campsite in the lunchroom – or for a school assembly, meet-the-teacher, fall festival, etc. Older Scouts can speak about the fun of Scouting. Be sure to have adequate adult supervision and be aware of Youth Protection guidelines. This should be done 2-3 days in advance of the sign-up night if your school does not allow classroom visits by your local Executive.

16. **Posters in schools**
Secure permission from each school to have posters announcing the recruitment event posted around the school in high-traffic areas 7-10 days in advance of the recruitment event. Be sure to have them removed after the event. They could perhaps be replaced by new posters with “It’s not too late.” NFC will provide the posters.

17. **Banners/Billboards over “Main Street” advertising the recruitment event**
Identify the best high-traffic location(s) for a banner or billboard. Secure permission to hang the banner(s) 1-2 weeks in advance of the sign up night. If the municipality must hang it, then provide them with the banner(s). Be sure to be clear on the duration of use and any other requirements. Be sure to follow up regarding the removal of the banners. The NFC will provide a banner for use, but it must be returned upon the completion of the recruitment event.
Unit Marketing, Invitation & Recruitment Agreement

DUE NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, AUGUST 6 to your local Executive

District: ___________  Unit Type: __Pack   __Troop   #: _____   School(s): ____________________________

As my Unit’s Membership Chair, our unit commits to do the following:

☐ (for Packs) Attend 1 of the “Fall Pack Planning” meetings with my Executive – or meet 1-on-1 at a later date.

☐ In advance of August Roundtable, complete & submit my unit’s Pack Info Sheet – including a finalized budget, calendar of events/activities/meetings & leadership.

☐ In advance of August Roundtable, update the unit Be-A-Scout pin with accurate meeting date/time/location, point of contact, email, phone and unit activity fee. Online registration is enabled & a member of the unit is assigned to follow up on any online inquiries.

☐ Attend the August Roundtable to receive important updates & training regarding recruitment efforts.

☐ Execute, as a unit, at minimum 5 of the marketing, invitation & recruitment initiatives from this packet as indicated below with an ‘x’ in advance of the scheduled sign up night. Items 1, 2/3/4, 5, 6 will be deployed by the NFC through your Executive/District-level Volunteer:

You MUST select 2 of the following items (7-10):

☐ 7. Ask-A-Friend Recruitment
☐ 8. Back-to-School/curriculum night/meet the teacher table displays
☐ 9. Presence at Community Events & Spaces
☐ 10. Charter partner advertisement

Select at least 3 of the following items (11-17):

☐ 11. Personal social media posts from unit families
☐ 12. Social media posts to community pages (Nextdoor, Community PTO/PTA/School)
☐ 13. Current Scouts and leaders wearing their uniforms or unit t-shirt to school
☐ 14. Individual invitation postcards to eligible families
☐ 15. Visual demonstration at schools
☐ 16. Posters in schools
☐ 17. Banners/Billboards over “Main Street” advertising the recruitment event

☐ Host a parent orientation meeting for all new families within 10 days of the sign up night.

☐ Ensure all applications (youth & adult) are submitted in a timely manner to my local Executive.

☐ Schedule basic training for all new leaders to be held as soon as possible

__________________________________________________________  ________________________
Name of Unit Membership Chair     Date