

Day Camp 101

A overview of how Cub Scout Day Camp works in the Orange County Council, Boy Scouts of America. While not a official document from the council, this attempts to cover most of what takes place in the process of putting together a camp. It is directed at the camp directors. It is a continual work in progress.

Camps

There are many camps in the council. Each district puts on a camp. In the past the Scout Reach unit and the Soccer and Scouting group have put on camps. Camps are a five day activity where the Cub and parents come each day to a location near their home. Camps generally start in the last week of June and can run through middle or late August. To make optimal use of the available resources we do not schedule more than two camps in any week.

Each year there is a common theme for the camps. But each camp has it own personality and develops its own program. The themes are on a five year rotation. This way a camper will experience each of the themes as he moves from Tiger to Webelos II. The themes are: Fun in the Sun, The American Adventure, Cub Scout Safari, Exploring Your World and Passport to Adventure.

Meetings

There are monthly meetings of the directors of all of the camps in the council. These take place at the council offices, on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. This is where discussion of things that affect all of the camps takes place. They are a good place to get to know the the other camp directors and program directors and learn what they are doing and share experiences. There are some camp directors that have a lot of experience and all are happy to share. The meetings in July and August are not held because camps are running.

After the camps, generally a the September meeting, we debrief how the camps went, how things can be improved and share what made each camp special and have cake.

Registration

Registration is one of the key areas of camp. Everyone that comes to camp, each camper, adult volunteer, staff (including medics), youth volunteer and sibling must register and complete and turn in a hard copy of their medical form. The registration form provides several things. First it tells the camp director who is going to be at the camp. The medical form provides information about known or potential problems, and authorizes medical treatment if it should be necessary. Together these also provides emergency contact information, emergency contacts are necessary for everyone at camp including the parents. The forms for minors have authorization sections for the shooting sports. Because of this information and authorizations the forms need to be at camp. This is also why they need to have a “wet” signature. And because of these the form needs to be stored by the council for several years for insurance reasons.

The National BSA policy is that the “Annual Health and Medical Record should not be transmitted via email or stored electronically by units, districts, or councils” Plans are under way at National to provide the capability to provide an online or high tech version of the medical form, but there is no scheduled completion date at this time.

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Most of registration is done through CampMaster. The medical form is the exception to this. CampMaster is an online application that collects information and fees. It provides an administrative side that the camp staff can use to download information, send emails to participants and check the status of the camp registration. The registration for each district's camp is handled separately. Each camp has a person that is the registration contact who may get notification from CampMaster of activity if desired and is who questions sent through the CampMaster website go to.

For each camp there are different types of participants, this can vary by camp. The typical ones are Camper, Adult Volunteer, Youth Volunteers, Siblings, and Staff. There are some differences in the information that is collected for each type of participant.

Each registration gets a confirmation email. Included in that email is information about the camp, medical forms, contact information. This can be customized for each camp.

The new, 2017, version of CampMaster also has a shopping cart so one person can register many participants for camp and make one payment online.

Registration forms, and other forms, are also available as Adobe Portable Document (PDF) files on the daycamps.ocbsa.org website. These can be filled out on your computer and saved.

Packs or dens are encouraged to register together. Optimally a "Pack Coordinator" takes care of this task. This person takes on the substantial task of making sure that everyone is registering for camp. They may take charge of collecting and turning in all of the medical forms for a pack, prodding people to come to training and orientation sessions, answering questions, and reminding them when they are supposed to come to camp. They are the first people making sure that there are enough adults at camp. They may also take care of distributing T shirts to their pack, making sure that carpools are organized, and many other things.

Registering by pack makes it much easier to ensure that the proper ratio of campers to adults is met. It also makes it easy to keep the members of a den together as camp packs and dens are assigned. To help coordinate this information there are roster forms available for each group. If all of the campers from one den are placed on one roster and each roster has only the campers from one den it makes the den assignments much smoother. The rosters are available as an Excel spreadsheet.

If your camp closes registration before your camp starts it is very important that you make this information know to two groups of people. First the pack coordinators. They are responsible to make sure that all of the parents know the close date and encouraging them to get their forms in on time. The second group is the council day camp staff; the council day camp adviser, and the day camp chairman. They help make sure that all of the professionals who may have registration forms turned in to them know the appropriate dates for the camps and that information that is sent out from the council is accurate.

Most registration is done online, so the information is available to the camp right away. Medical forms should go directly to the camp and be held through camp and then turned in to the council. Any registration or medical forms that get turned in on paper to the council offices will have the information

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entered into CampMaster by the council staff. This may take a while. All medical forms should flow through the council office to the camp director. Paper registration that gets turned in to the camp director needs to have any funds connected to it turned in to the the council office or to the District professional in a timely manner. The registration information can be either entered by the camp staff or turned in to the council. Be very clear which option applies to each form, “Entered by camp staff” and not a green dot in the corner.

If there are outstanding charges the council is responsible to collect the balance of the camp fee from the camper. This is not the job of the camp director or the pack coordinator.

Some camps have had the council office handle all of the processing of off line registration for their camp. While the council does strive to process the registration information quickly, experience has shown that the camp directors may find that they want the information sooner than the council can provide it. So many camps take a more active role in the process, preferring that all paper registration forms go the camp director first. This hands on approach means that the camp director knows more about the enrollment in their camp sooner as the volume of registrations for all of the council camp activities can take some time for the camping department to process. In both cases it is important that the camp director take care to be sure that all of the information and payments gets to the council and to the camp in a timely manner.

At the end of camp all of the medical forms for the camp get returned to the council day camp risk management committee member. This includes forms for everyone at camp, the campers, siblings, youth adults and staff. The forms are stored for insurance purposes. At the same time the logs from the medic should be turned in to be stored. Together these provide a record of who was at camp and all injuries that occurred.

The way the sibling fees work is this. The sibling fee is \$5 per day for each of the first four days they come to camp, their fifth day is free. Of the first days \$5 fee, \$4 goes to the cost of the sibling T shirt and \$1 goes to the camp. The full \$5 fee for the second, third, and fourth day goes to the camp. So the camp will get \$1, \$6, \$11, or \$16.

Camperships

The goal is to have every Cub Scout attend day camp. Cost should not be the reason for a cub not attending. The campership program is the primary means to help make sure every cub can attend.

Camperships get turned in to the council office and are given to the day camp adviser. The day camp adviser and the day camp chairman and one or two other members of the day camp committee review the forms and decide what award each campership request should get. The day camp chairman notifies the camp director of campership awards for their camp. The day camp adviser takes care of notifying the camper of their campership award.

Camperships are available for up to fifty percent of the camp fee. There is not a hard criteria for camperships but each application is reviewed on an individual basis.

Campership applications are available with the registration forms in the same formats.

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Refunds

It is inevitable that some camper will not be able to come to camp and will need a refund. Refunds are handled by the council office. The registration forms for campers say “All refunds need to be requested in writing and submitted to the Council office three weeks prior to the start of camp. All refunds are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.” The refund policy is:

Up to three weeks prior to camp: a refund is available of all fees paid less \$50 per camper.

Withing three weeks of the start of camp: refunds, less \$50 per camper, are only available should the camper in question find himself in one of the these circumstances:

- 1) his family moves out of the council;
- 2) there is a death or serious illness in his immediate family requiring his attendance;
- 3) he becomes ill and is unable to attend the entire week of camp with a doctors note.

All refund requests must be in writing. Up to three weeks prior to camp requests may be sent to the Orange County Council office. Within three weeks of camp please make refund requests through the District Executive, listing the reason the camper is unable to attend. Refund requests will be measured against the refund policy and granted accordingly. Refunds will be mailed to the Unit Committee Chair by the second week in September and may be combined with other fees owed or due and any outstanding debts to the council.

Depending on the timing some camps have had a camper that can not attend trade with a late registering camper to benefit everyone. Or campers have moved to other camps later in the summer. We want to be flexible in our process to ensure that as many scouts come to camp as possible.

When there are questions or concerns about registration we want to work together to make sure that a resolution is easily reached. Make sure that the camp director and District professional are part of the process as appropriate, they can help in answering questions in both directions.

Other Discounts

Units that are Journey to Excellence (JTE) Gold for the last year get a \$5 discount for their campers.

Key staff members may also qualify for one free camper. This is a substantial discount and so needs to be used with discretion. A guideline for who should get this is the key staff member should be working the full week of camp and making a significant contribution to camp. There is not a set number of percentage of the camp but a reasonable and modest number should be the guide. There is a form for Key Staff Campers that gets filled out and sent to the Council Daycamp Chairman who will enter the camper into the system without needing payment. The key staff camper can be transferred to campers other than the adults own.

Money

Who gets what from where.

The 2017 camp registration fee for campers is \$160. There are two primary discounts, \$20 for early registration (30 days before camp) and \$5 for JTE Gold units.

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A portion of that fee goes to the camp for each registered camper for their program expenses. The camp gets this amount for every camper that attends the camp, including the campership campers. The camp needs to put together a budget and turn it in to the council activities director before these funds are made available. The Camp Director working with the District Executive figure out how to handle this money. The Camp Director and their staff figure out what this gets sent on to best support the program. This can be spent in a few ways.

- 1) The preferred method - purchase orders.
- 2) The second preferred option - checks to specific vendors.
- 3) A cash advance. This can only go to the District Executive.
- 4) Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses.

A portion of the registration fee is spent by the District for expenses that relate to the camp like site reservation fees, trash collection and extra restroom rentals. The camp director should work with the District Executive to determine these expenses.

The council spends a portion to cover the T shirts, patches, truck rental and shared equipment. The shared equipment includes but is not limited to canopies, tables, water coolers, ice chests, the archery equipment for all the camps, tools and game equipment.

There are many things that a camp should plan on in their program budget. A contingency is always part of the plan, this should be enough so you have some room to adjust. Program expendables like wood, paint, leather, marshmallows are of course things to count on. If there are longer term things you are buying for your camp like marshmallow shooters those need to be included. Any awards or recognition given to campers or adult volunteers or youth volunteers or staff or park rangers also come out of the camps program budget. If you are providing food that needs to be figured in as well. Things that are give to the campers like hats or neckerchiefs could be part of this. If you are bringing a special activity for opening or closing there may be an expense to consider.

Camp Program

There are a few things we use as basic guides in developing camp programs. One is the National Camp Accreditation Program, the “standards”. A far reaching document that has the aim of making sure the camps are safe and have a program that is dynamic and age appropriate. The Guide To Safe Scouting is always part of the process and is particularly important for the Cub programs as they make large leaps quickly at that age. There are other things on the philosophy and approach to daycamp. In one that came out last year as the new Cub programs was starting, Bob Scott the National Cub Scout Experience Manager said “The overall purpose of day camps is to offer a fun experience and extend the participant's Scouting engagement. The purpose is not advancement. If advancement happens as part of fun engaging program, great! But it should not be the focus of camp.”

Taking that as our guide the Orange County Council Cub Day camps decided to have a coordinated program where all of the camps work on the same one elective adventure for each rank. This is to insure that campers who attend different camps come back with a similar experience and when the den continues through the year Cubs who could not attend daycamp do not miss the opportunity to work on

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a required adventure if the rest of the den completed it at Daycamp. Scouting is a year round activity and we do not want a Cub to be at a large disadvantage if he can not come to Daycamp. And we want Cubs who attend different Day camps to have a comparable base experience.

The goal of daycamp is to have fun, and the great thing about the way the Scouting program works is that the stuff you do to have fun often has a place where you can use it for advancement. So we strive to develop a program around cool stuff in the outdoors and then go back and see how the activities can be applied to advancement. In all cases the program helps in the bigger aims of Scouting; character development, citizenship training, mental and physical fitness.

Does this mean that we can not do specific parts of adventures at camp, of course not. The feeling of accomplishment from completing something, getting it signed off, and being recognized is a very important part of the growth process that scouting develops. There are parts of the adventures that can be done well in the camp setting, and there are parts that are better suited to a den or home setting. The development and the advancement process is just that, a process. If it is rushed then some of the important unquantifiable elements can be lost.

Den leaders and parents will always want to know what will be worked on at Daycamp. This makes sense, I applaud the mom who is willing to tackle a wood project with her cubs despite having no background in the area. But I can likely provide a fuller experience because that is what I do for a living. That experience is the important thing about camp and it includes more than narrowly completing a specific requirement. If a camper goes home at the end of the week and did not play hard, make stuff, find new friends, learn exciting things, get dirty and tired then we did not do our job.

A key element in structuring a camp program is to make it age appropriate. This does three things. First it makes sure that the Cubs taking part in the activity are ready and able to do the steps and tasks. Second it makes sure that the Cubs are not working below their level, boredom is never a good activity. Third it provides something for the younger Cubs to look forward to. We have been using this approach at my camp, Saddleback, for a long time and find it very successful. The program is adjusted a little each year but when we first looked at the new Cub Program we found there were many things that were in our program that could be applied to the new adventures. There are also things that we do each year which are just fun and have no direct connection to advancement.

Siblings

The sibling camps are primarily to provide the adult volunteers a means to bring younger siblings with them so the adult can volunteer and be with their camper, adults are critical to a volunteer run camp, something I am sure you know. This is why siblings are only able to come when their parent is in camp, along with the significant difference is regulations if a camp was to start to run a day care. Until a decade or so ago we did not charge a fee for siblings but realized that this was drawing on the resources that were supposed to be going to the campers. We all know that because of the great set of volunteers who run the sibling camps, and thank you for that, the little ones think that the whole camp is there for them. It is important to keep the age appropriate thing in mind, which includes things like down time for the siblings to recharge as well as activities at their skill level. There can be, and should be, graduated age appropriate activities for the siblings just like there are for the campers. But also remember that siblings are not campers.

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Equipment check out

There is a shared set of equipment for all of the Cub Scout Day Camps in the Orange County Council. This equipment is used hard through the summer by all of the camps so it is important that everyone take care of it so that we can all make use of it.

The most current version of this list is on-line at <http://www.lagerquist.com/daycamp> The number at the end of the name and the inventory date at the top right will change.

Please prepare your request and get it to the councils day camp quartermaster at least two weeks before your camp, more is better. Changes and adjustments can be made after the request is in. With many camps running the same weeks the quartermaster staff will then help to resolve any conflicts and let you know what the final distribution will be. This also helps us prepare for moving things from one truck to another.

If you take something out, bring it back in the same shape. This means the same number of hammers in the box as there were when you got it (which should be labeled). Water coolers and ice chests should be clean, dry, free of residue and have their lids. Please leave things in the state you would like to get them in.

Things do get worn, damaged and broken. It is a fact of day camp and we all know it will happen. Bring it back anyway. Let the quartermaster staff know as soon as possible, we may be able to repair it or get a replacement for you or the next camp. Even if something is broken bring it back. This includes everything including archery equipment. If something like a bow is questionable, put a label on it and bring it back, do not destroy it. Be descriptive, "broke" is less helpful than "the dohicky on the left is loose." If you have questions about how to use something, ask.

Again, bring back everything.

Each camp gets a rental truck to transport and store the camp gear. The camp needs to provide at least one driver, preferable more. Each driver needs to supply a copy of their current drivers license and insurance card to the council before driving the truck. Bring the truck back with fuel in it.

The pick up and drop off schedule works like this. The camps that finished on Friday bring back their truck and equipment on Saturday at 9:00 am. The camps that start on the following Monday should plan on picking up their gear and trucks at 10:30 am on Saturday. Plan on bringing people to assist in putting things away and loading the truck. Make sure that the helpers are ready to help with appropriate footwear attitude and ability.

Health and Safety

There are a set of National Camp Accreditation Standards that we follow. There is much discussion of these at the monthly meeting and at national Camp School. These are online at:

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsorce/OutdoorProgram/CampAccreditation.aspx>

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There may be updates to the standards that are in the program circulars.

Patches

Patches are ordered by the council for all of the camps. Two versions of the patch are done, one for the campers and one for youth or adults. Each camp handles the patches slightly differently.

Tigers

The Council policy on Tigers at Daycamp is:

Tiger Cub Adult Partner Ratio at Cub Scout Day Camp

Summarized is the following statement made by Jerry Dehoney, Assistant National Director of the Cub Scout Division:

“Tiger Cubs need to attend Cub Scout Day Camp with an adult partner. A parent can designate someone to be the adult partner at Day Camp. The Camp Director can decide on the appropriate ratio of adult partners to Tiger Cubs.”

In conclusion, Tiger Cubs should attend Day Camp with an adult partner that the parent has designated. Although there is no set ratio, a minimum of one adult to four Tiger cubs (1:4) is required, but a 1:2 ratio is recommended.”

Lions

Because boys do not join Lions until they enter Kindergarten and they can join Tigers when they are out of Kindergarten boys that will be Lions in the fall should come to day camp as siblings.

T Shirts

The day camp T shirt is the uniform at Day Camp. The Council takes care of ordering shirts for the summer based on the past use. There are shirts for each group of people at camp, each being a different color so it is easy to tell who is who. The shirt color for campers changes each year through a limited number of colors, the other colors stay the same from year to year.

The shirts for the Adult Volunteers (parents) are Royal Blue. The shirts for Youth Volunteers are Orange. The shirts for Key Staff are Forest Green. The shirts for Medics are Red. The shirts for Siblings are Kelly Green. All of the shirts have the same theme logo on the back and the name and a graphic on the front.

Each camper, youth volunteer, and sibling gets one shirt as part of their registration. Key staff and medics get a shirt as well. Adult volunteers that sign up to work three days or more at camp get a free shirt. Additional shirts are available for everyone and can be ordered on the registration forms for a fee. Some camps also have extra shirts available for purchase at the camp.

National Camp School

To run an accredited camp the Camp Director and the Camp Program Director need to have current National Camp School certification cards in Day Camp Administration and Program. Camp School Certification is good for five years.

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National Camp School for Cub Day Camp is a three day program. There are generally several sessions of Camp School each spring starting in February and continuing through March. The locations of the schools change some each year. The registration cost for Camp School is covered by the Council for up to two people from each camp. The cost of getting to the camp is up to the individual.

Range masters

the shooting sports programs require certified range masters. During the course of the spring we coordinate training sessions for range masters for archery and BB Gun.

Cub Ranks

In general Cubs attend camp as the rank that they will be the following year. So a Cub that has spent a year as a Wolf will attend Day Camp as a Bear.

A young man who has completed Kindergarten can then register as a Tiger with a unit and come to Day Camp over the summer. This is a great way to start their scouting trail. And if the parents volunteer it is a wonderful opportunity to start the training process for them and provide them with resources for a successful scouting experience for them and their son.

The LDS units transition Cubs based on their birthdays so their Cubs follow a slightly different process.

Promoting Camp

There is a web site for daycamp hosted by the council at <http://daycamps.ocbsa.org> . This provides basic information and contacts for the camps. Registration forms are available here as well.

A council wide mailer goes out in the spring before Scout-O-Rama with dates, location and contact information.

Much of promoting camp falls to each district and camp. More of the specifics of the camp in the district can be covered on the local level than trying to deal with the information for all of them. There are many options for promoting camp in the district. Round tables, the unit commissioners, district web sites and the all important pack visits.

Themes

After several years of choosing new themes each year, and the challenges of coming up with new ones the camp directors decided to choose a set of five themes and repeat them year after year. These themes are: Passport to Adventure, Fun in the Sun, The American Adventure, Cub Scout Safari, Exploring Your World. The theme is a starting place for each camp to develop their program. A new logo is developed for each theme each year, each time the a theme repeats there is a new logo. The logo appears on the patch and the camp T shirts.

The themes for several years where and are: 1998, All Aboard Day Camp; 1999, Exploring your World; 2000, Salute to the 20th Century; 2001, Passport to Adventure; 2002, Fun in the Sun; 2003, Wings Wheels and Rudders; 2004, The American Adventure; 2005, Cub Scout Safari; 2006, Exploring your World; 2007, Passport to Adventure; 2008, Fun in the Sun; 2009, The American Adventure; 2010, Cub

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Scout Safari; 2011, Exploring your World; 2012, Passport to Adventure; 2013, Fun in the Sun; 2014 The American Adventure; 2015, Cub Scout Safari; 2016, Exploring Your World; 2017, Passport to Adventure.