

JANUARY – Preparing for the Webelos-to-Scout Transition

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AARON: Happy New Year, and welcome to Cubcast 2016. I am Aaron Derr, senior writer for *Boys' Life* magazine, and I'm pretty excited about our upcoming CubCast year.

AMY: Me, too. I'm Amy Hutcherson, Cub Scout member experience specialist. Have you got a Think-n-Grin joke for us to start things off, Aaron?

AARON: Of course I do, Amy.

AMY: I knew you would.

AARON: What did the Webelos Scouts say to the Boy Scouts who were standing on the bridge?

AMY: Hmm. I don't know, Aaron. What did the Webelos Scouts say to the Boy Scouts standing on the bridge?

AARON: Don't mind us – we're just crossing over!

Music Fades

AARON: Crossing over. That's an homage to the bridging ceremony that occurs when Webelos cross over into Boy Scouts. This month is all about getting ready for the Webelos-to-Scout Transition. And right here in the studio to chat with us about preparing for the Webelos-to-Scout Transition is Cub Scout Experience Manager at the National Service Center, Darin Kinn. Darin also has some real-life experience in this area as the Assistant Cubmaster of Pack 910 in Allen, Texas. Welcome to CubCast, Darin. We're glad you're here.

DARIN: Thanks, Aaron. Pleasure to be here.

AARON: For our listeners who may be new to Cub Scouting, tell us what exactly is the Webelos-to-Scout Transition?

DARIN: So, the Webelos-to-Scout Transition you may have heard referred to as a bridging ceremony, a crossing-over ceremony, and basically it's the time in a Cub Scout's life when they have completed the Arrow of Light rank, they've completed Cub Scouting, and they're ready to take that next step into Boy Scouting. They're ready to cross over into that new program area.

AMY: Okay. So why do all the seasoned leaders talk about this? I mean, what's the big deal?

DARIN: It's a very big deal. It's a critical time for a Cub Scout. The data tells us that many, many Cub Scouts drop at that point. They feel they have completed Scouting; they have completed Cub Scouting. And as an organization we know through studies done through Tufts University and the Baylor Study recently done that the impact that Scouting can have on a boy's life throughout his adolescent years is tremendous. And it's absolutely critical that a boy takes advantage of every program area that we have, not only Cub Scouting but Boy Scouting and on into Venturing. So that point where a boy drops at Cub Scouting, it's critical that we give him the encouragement to take that next step and continue on in the journey through his Scouting life.

AMY: Got it.

AARON: So how do we, as leaders, get our Webelos ready for their bridging ceremony?

DARIN: There are some things built into the Cub Scouting program that help leaders and parents and boys do that - to prepare for that transition. A required Arrow of Light adventure called The Scouting Adventure has a full set of requirements that help this crossover point. So, within those requirements, you'll see Cub Scouts are asked to do things like learn the Scout Oath and Scout Law and describe what it means, describe what the Pledge of Allegiance means, visit troops, and really do many of the requirements that are contained within the new Scout rank within the Boy Scout program. So moving from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting, that transition is eased by the familiarity of those requirements. They've already done many of them as a Webelo, so when they move into the rank of Scout, they're ready to hit the ground running and make a smooth transition.

AMY: Okay, Darin. So we've established that this is a big deal and that there's lots of things that are built into the program that will assist leaders. Are there any other resources that you can think of to help Cub Scout leaders make this transition easy?

DARIN: Absolutely. There are some great online digital resources; www.scouting.org/programupdates is one, and www.Scouting.org/cubscouts. Both contain materials on ways that we can assist Cub Scouts to bridge from Cub Scouting into Boy Scouting, as well as good, old-fashioned Google. If you Google "Webelos-to-Scout Transition" or "Crossing Over" or "Bridging Ceremony" you'll find many, many, many ideas of ways we can both celebrate the accomplishments of the Cub Scout that they have achieved the rank of Arrow of Light and they're ready to take this step, and ways we can help and provide encouragement...

AARON: And what about Boy Scout troops and Scoutmasters, Darin? What about their involvement and what their role is in crossing over?

DARIN: They need to be prepared. With the new Scouting Adventure, as written into the Cub Scout program, Cub Scout's Webelos will be comin' their way. They'll be visiting troops. They'll be wanting to interact with troops like they never have before. So it is advisable that Scoutmasters and units be ready and encourage that interaction and encourage that engagement.

AMY: There has to be a way that parents can get involved, right?

DARIN: Parents play a very critical role. We know oftentimes at that age, a 10 or 11-year-old boy, they need a guiding, gentle hand to keep going, and that's the best thing that parents can do. Give them that gentle nudge to say, "Look, keep going at this," because parents know the value of Scouting; they know the impact that Scouting has on the development of their boy, of their son. And we know that Scouting turns boys into great leaders, great members of the community, etc. So, parents can give that gentle nudge to keep a boy on the path.

AARON: Now, Darin, if I'm a parent of a Cub Scout, and I am so to speak, shopping for a Boy Scout troop for my son to join, what do you recommend I do? Do I go through my own pack? Can I sort of go on my own and find a Boy Scout troop? Are there resources for me?

DARIN: You know what? All of the above. It is certainly appropriate. There is probably a history of troops that boys from your pack have bridged over into. That is certainly a good route to check those out. And reaching out to a unit commissioner is a great resource. That unit commissioner may be able to hook you up with a troop in your area as well as attending Roundtable is a great place to network and get to know troops in your

area. So there are many, many resources available and it's very appropriate to shop around, to check out troops and find one that is the best fit for you and your family.

AARON: Cool.

AMY: Okay, I'm a believer. You've convinced me that this Webelos-to-Scout Transition is certainly very important. Is there anything we've missed that might help our listeners in learning more about this process?

DARIN: It's important to realize that it's not only the encouragement of moving forward, but it's a time to also pause and celebrate the accomplishments of what that Cub Scout has achieved. They've gone through the program, they've earned the rank of Arrow of Light and that is absolutely amazing. So before pushing on to that next level, make sure we celebrate and give a high-five and an atta-boy along the way.

AARON: I had the opportunity for the first time to recognize some boys who were Arrow of Light Webelos who were crossing over. And the opportunity to recognize them as a leader was really cool because you could see it in their eyes. Boy, they were proud. They had really worked hard for five years, and you could tell that it meant a lot to them. That was really cool. Sometimes at meetings ... the boys ... you see their attention wandering, but boy, when they were getting that Arrow of Light, when they were about to become Boy Scouts, that was a cool deal.

AMY: Right.

DARIN: It is a very special time.

AMY: It is.

AMY: I can share, too, that as a mom of a son who's went through this process, it was a better moment for me to see him make this accomplishment in Boy Scouting is really, really profound.

AARON: Yeah. I mean, it's really cool to see boys grow up from Cub Scouts into Boy Scouts and it's important to get them into the Boy Scout program to see what great men they can become.

DARIN: Absolutely.

AARON: Darin, thanks for coming on the show and helping us get ready for the big transition.

DARIN: Thank you, Aaron.

AMY: We'll be back with Reminders and Tips right after we find out how ScoutCast is starting their year.

ScoutCast – Outdoor Ethics Guide

AMY: Now for your 2016 Reminders and Tips. Family Friends of Scouting, also known as FOS, is an annual council-wide presentation conducted in every pack, troop, crew, team, ship, and post between the months of November and March. This campaign asks parents and families to consider financially supporting the Scouting program in an effort to offset the costs of providing Scouting to their children. So, if you haven't already done so, contact your district FOS chair for more details. Your support and participation in the family FOS program is critical for your unit's success.

AARON: So, have you finalized plans for your Blue and Gold Banquet? Many packs have it during Scouting Anniversary Week, which begins this year on February 7th with Scout Sunday, and ends on the 13th with Scout Sabbath. The Blue and Gold Banquet is discussed in great detail in the December 2012 CubCast. So check it out if you haven't already because careful planning is necessary to make it a fun and successful pack event.

AMY: Be sure to pick up the January-February issue of *Scouting* magazine. There is a wonderful article on how you can get your Scouting story in front of the local media, potential Scouts and parents with tips from the BSA's Storytelling Workshops. The 2014 October CubCast on these Storytelling Workshops is the perfect companion piece.

AARON: Speaking of *Scouting* magazine, also in that issue is my own frightening-but-true tale of what happened to me as I directed my Cub Scouts on an orienteering adventure. Amy, have you ever gone orienteering with Cub Scouts?

AMY: Never.

AARON: It is an adventure.

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AARON: So that's it for the January 2016 CubCast. Thanks again to our guest, Darin Kinn, for joining us.

AMY: And thank you for listening. Be sure to come back next month when we explore Cub Scouting and Shooting Sports.

AARON: If there's something we can do to make CubCast a better resource for you, be sure to let us know. Just send us an e-mail to cubcast@scouting.org or tweet to [@cubcast](https://twitter.com/cubcast). With that, I am Aaron Derr.

AMY: And I'm Amy Hutcherson, with one final tip. Go to iTunes on your smartphone or tablet and subscribe to CubCast on the Podcast app. This way you won't miss a single episode. You'll be glad you did. And from all of us at CubCast, Happy New Year!

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