

FEBRUARY – WEBELOS TO SCOUT WITH NO TROOP

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AARON: Hello, everyone, and welcome to our CubCast for February. I'm Aaron Derr, former Cubmaster and current Senior Writer for *Boys' Life* magazine, along with the lovely and talented Amy Hutcherson, Membership Growth Coach for the Northeast Region.

AMY: So, your all-girl Webelos den is getting ready to transition into a Scouts BSA troop, but since troops for girls are only just now forming, what's a leader to do?

AARON: Now, normally this is the part of the program where we're joined by an expert who has tons of experience on our topic, but because Scouts BSA troop for girls are brand new, we don't have a seasoned veteran we can call upon to share past experiences.

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AARON: So, this is where my co-host steps out of hosting duties to serve as our very special guest. Amy Hutcherson is a seasoned Webelos leader of an all-boy den and so is very familiar with the Webelos-to-Scout transition, and as a membership growth specialist she has just the expertise we need. Welcome to the other side of the CubCast microphone, Amy.

AMY: Thanks so much, Aaron. I'm happy to be here.

AARON: Okay. First of all, how does the traditional Webelos-to-Scouts transition work?

AMY: The Webelos-to-Scout transition is actually pretty simple. It's a working relationship between Cub Scout leaders and Scouts BSA troop leaders. The goal is to constantly have communications open, to have activities or meetings that can be attended, and the whole point is to make sure that our Webelos are transitioning into a Scouts BSA troop. And this can happen by inviting them to attend special events, by asking them to take part in a ceremony, by asking them to just witness some of the things that the Scouts BSA troops are doing. It's all in an effort to get the Cub Scouts, excited, interested, knowledgeable about crossing over into Scouts BSA.

AARON: So now that female Scouts BSA troops are forming, how does that affect the Webelos transition process?

AMY: Okay. The whole process isn't really affected. It can be a little bit more challenging only because this is new, right? Scouts BSA troops for girls are new. So for those younger girls, the Webelos to visit a troop of Scouts BSA girls is maybe a little bit more challenging just because we may not be fully formed and operational quite yet. But still again, communication lines need to be open in order to make sure that that happens successfully.

AARON: So, what do we, as Cub Scout leaders do then instead?

AMY: If there is a troop for these girls to cross over into, it is the ideal situation, so, if there's troops in the area where there's Scouts BSA girl troops, definitely get in contact with them, reach out to the folks in your district that may have a specialist that does only Webelos-to-Scout transition.

If there is not a troop in your local area to transition to, this is a perfect opportunity for you to have a conversation with your pack's chartered partner to say, "Hey, we have this group of girls. They want to transition into Scouts BSA. Let's make this happen together. It's important." if your chartered partner isn't necessarily onboard, you seek out other chartered partners. Maybe there's other organizations within your community, whether it be civic or religious or educational organizations that would love to help sponsor and make this happen.

Also, too, the position of den chief is huge. We aren't quite going to have those in place yet for the Scouts BSA troops for girls, but even the den chiefs that are boys; they're coming from a supported troop. Reach out to those troops.

AARON: So, along the same lines, how can an all-girls Webelos den take advantage of the den chief program option?

AMY: It's the same exact way. If they have a den chief that happens to be a boy, that's definitely allowed from a Scouts BSA troop for boys, also too it's important to note that den chiefs can also come from our Venturing and Sea Scouting program. So, whether it be a young man or a young woman in those programs, they can also serve as den chiefs.

AARON: So, Amy, do you have any tips for an all-girl, Arrow of Light den that's working on their Arrow of Light requirements?

AMY: Absolutely. We get this question a lot, Aaron, and it's important to know that an all-girl Webelo den can certainly pair up with a Scouts BSA troop for boys to complete all of those requirements. So, the troop visits the camping or outdoor requirements all can be done with Scouts BSA troops for boys.

AARON: So, an all-girl Webelos den does not have to find an all-girl Scouts BSA troop to complete those requirements.

AMY: Correct.

AARON: So, there's tons of options for den chiefs basically and also tons of options for all-girl Webelos dens to satisfy those final Scout-related requirements, right? Okay, cool. What kind of resources are available to help that the Webelos-Scouts transition for leaders and parents alike?

AMY: Definitely your district is a resource; those folks on the committee are there to help in any way. Your council is a resource. Some districts and some councils put on special events hosted just for Webelos, and then a Scouts BSA troops come and kind of do a showcase of all the different types of things that they enjoy doing, and in that way the girls can kind of pick and choose, what activities are really most important to them, and which Scouts BSA troops focus on those certain things. There's also the [Scouting.org /programs](https://www.scouting.org/programs) page that can help with lots of different key things to think about; different folks you can reach out to and make sure that this is a success.

AARON: Yeah. It seems like if you're the leader of an all-girl Arrow of Light den, you'd be like the perfect candidate to start a Scouts BSA female troop, right? Cool. Well, this episode was fun and informative. Just like last month, it's good to know that our program has ways to address potential obstacles and still make the program work for our youth. Amy, thank you for helping out with this one.

AMY: My pleasure. And we'll be right back with Reminders and Tips after this brief Safety Moment.

Safety Moment – Chainsaw Safety

AMY: Okay, time for Reminders and Tips. Let's start with succession plans. Having a succession plan means being prepared to replace volunteers in key roles because the den or pack leader may have committed to their responsibilities but, alas, they may not be able to keep that commitment.

AARON: And since our motto is Be Prepared, a successor needs to be identified for the role should something unexpected happen. With a succession plan in place, you won't be scrambling around trying to fill a vacancy, and the pack can maintain its tradition of 100% trained leaders. Tune into the April 2014 CubCast for more on succession plans and cultivating new leaders.

AMY: This is also a good time to be thinking about recruiting more youth into the pack with Spring Roundup. Talk to your Unit Serving Professional about coordinating your recruitment efforts with local schools.

AARON: Now here is an ongoing piece of business: Remember, Cub Scout Adventure Loops do not require an advancement report. They are to be presented at a den meeting whenever each adventure is completed. It's all part of the instant recognition program of Cub Scouting. Stock up on the Adventure Loops ahead of time so you have them ready.

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AARON: And now this CubCast has to come to an end. Special thanks to my guest Amy Hutcherson for filling both hosting and guest duties.

AMY: And thank you for listening. Be sure to send us your thoughts and ideas for a future CubCast. Just send an email to cubcast@scouting.org or a tweet to @cubcast. With that, I'm Amy Hutcherson.

AARON: And I'm Aaron Derr. Join us next month for planning summer activities. And spoiler alert – there are other activities besides camping. Have a great day, everybody.

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