

Getting To Know You!

from Leader files

Welcome to the first day of Scouting! Beginning as a new Beaver, Cub or Scout can sometimes be a little intimidating when you don't know anybody yet. So start this "new year" with the message and the feeling that happy things happen here. Try some of these "getting-to-know-you" activities, and watch the ice break.

Silly Name Game

Kids sit in a circle. As you go around, each child picks a funny word to go with their name. Each child must say his or her name and repeat previous names. You could also pick a name that describes you best. ("I am Marshmallow Mandy 'cause I love marshmallows, and that was Weiner William and Skateboard Sammy and Computer-geek Christopher"). It's a

fun way to get to know one another and learn everybody's names. Don't forget leaders should have a funny name too!

Animal Groups

At your first meeting, everybody gathers together. Give each youth a piece of paper with an animal's name (perhaps the patrol mascot?). The kids must locate the other members of their group by imitating that animal's sound only! Get ready for hoots, meows, moos, and lots of chuckles.

Co-operative Musical Toadstools

Put several sheets of newspaper down on the floor. Play music and tell the Beavers to hop and play around the room like tiny toads. When the music stops, every toad must run and stand on a toadstool (paper). Gradually remove the papers until everyone must work together to stand on a single toadstool.

How do you do!

Children stand in a circle. Choose one child to start. Have the game starter walk around the outside of the circle and stop behind one person and say, "Hi, I'm _____." The other child turns around and says, "Hi, I'm ____." They then shake hands saying, "How do you do, how do you do, how do you do?" Each then runs in opposite directions around the circle saying "How do you do's" when they meet. The first one back to the spot where the "How do you do's" began is the one to introduce him/herself to another.

Switch!

Here's a great indoor or outdoor game to get youth actively learning about each other! With everyone in a circle, ask an open-ended question, such as "Have you ever been camping?" Everyone who answers, "yes" moves to

Illustration: Richard J. Pelsche

The activities are non-

STOP

in the Scouting movement. So you can understand our concern when we have to announce that while

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this ad, we are running out of good Scouting stories. And you can help. An outdoor adventure, indoor activity or inspiring thoughts? Send them

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Co-operative Musical Toadstools



Gradually remove the papers until everyone must work together to stand on a single toadstool.

Icebreaker activities for all sections

the middle, while the rest of the youth remains in place. Invite one or two Scouts to briefly tell about their camping trips. When they finish their stories, everyone steps back into the circle. Continue with new questions such as, "Do you have a brother?" or "Do you like to play soccer?" and once again, ask for quick stories. As the kids get used to the rules of the game, they can take turns asking the questions. Leaders can join in too!

Welcome Bags

Use these party favors to send positive messages to kids on the first day of Scouting. You could use a resealable plastic bag, or a paper bag for each child. Fill with an eraser, to signify that it's okay to make mistakes; a small plastic jewel that means each one of us is valuable in our own way; a little pack of Smarties® candies to show there are many different kinds of "smart"; a stick of gum so we all stick together; a sticker star because we always shine and "do our best"; and a heart sticker to show your group is a safe and caring place. Hold up the objects one at a time and reveal the hidden meanings to the group before you pass them out.

Create a Time Capsule

Make "time capsules" for the year, and get some great program ideas from the kids. Each Scout folds a sheet of paper into three columns, like a simple brochure. The first column is labeled "Things I Like to Eat," the middle column "Games I Like to Play," and the last column "Things I Would Like to Do in Scouts." The kids can decorate their own brochure with a photograph and their own designs. Make a "time capsule" out of a large, decorated box. Open it with a special ceremony at the end of the year.

Reporter

Split youth into pairs. One is the reporter, who asks ten questions of the subject. Examples:

- ☞ What is your name?
- ☞ How old are you?
- ☞ Where were you born?
- ☞ What is your favourite colour?
- ☞ What is your favourite food?
- ☞ What food don't you like?
- ☞ What do you enjoy doing most?
- ☞ What do you like about school?
- ☞ What don't you like about school?
- ☞ How many brothers do you have?
- ☞ How many sisters do you have?
- ☞ Who is someone you like?
- ☞ If you watch television, what show do you like?
- ☞ What kind of art do you like to do?
- ☞ Where would you like to go on a trip?
- ☞ What is your hobby or interest?
- ☞ What sport do you like?
- ☞ What is your favourite thing to do with your family?
- ☞ How are you most like your mom, dad, or another adult?
- ☞ If you were going to live alone on an island and could only take one thing with you, what would you take?
- ☞ What is the hardest thing you ever had to do?
- ☞ When was the last time you were angry?
- ☞ If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- ☞ What was the best thing anyone ever said to you?
- ☞ What was the best thing anyone ever gave you?
- ☞ When are you the happiest?

Then, switch and the subject becomes the reporter. Get together with the group, and share the results. Reporters could read everything they found out about their subject.

Circle of friends

Form two concentric circles, one inside the other. Have the kids in the inside circle turn to face the kids in the outside circle. Give them a topic to talk about such as their favourite kind of

music or the silliest thing they ever did. After one minute, have the circles move two places to the right. This will allow the kids to meet many new people as the circle moves slowly around.

Me, too!

Split the youth into pairs. Each pair will have two minutes to find three things they have in common. Once the time is up, put two pairs together and give the foursome a minute to find something all four kids have in common. Finally the group will present a list of the things they all have in common.

Enjoy these kid-tested activities which are sure to make everybody feel welcome. Send us more ideas at smuehlherr@scouts.ca. ✕

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