

Speech given to region meeting January 2009

When recruiting for other sections through open days or school newsletters you may be contacted by parents wishing to start their child in scouting at Joey Scout age (6-8years). If your group is strong enough both leader wise and youth member wise in the other sections then it is worth considering. The new section will need the support of the other sections at the beginning.

The initial step is to identify two or more potential leaders and get the training started. To register a Joey Scout mob a group needs one fully trained leader and at least one other leader in training. As the ratio of adult to child for Joey Scout outings is quite low it is better to have more than two leaders if possible.

The Group Leader identifies and informally interviews potential leaders before recommending they commence their training. The Group purchases a Leader's Kit from the Region Office. This contains the necessary forms and applications as well as information for the potential leader.

Leaders are generally parents of youth members but leaders can also be interested community members, grandparents or Rovers from the Group or another Group. Venturer Scouts can be youth helpers but not leaders.

The first step for a new leader is to attend an "Introductory Interview" with one of the Region's Training team. Generally the Group Leader accompanies the new leader to the interview. At the Introductory interview a PLA (Personal Leader Advisor) is appointed and this person is the one the trainee leader can contact to answer any queries. The PLA should also check that the trainee is progressing through the courses. Other Regional and District leaders (Training team, development officer) should be introduced to the new leader so that they have a range of support. Suitable training courses are also identified at this interview.

When the leaders are trained (or nearly trained) advertising and promotion of the new mob should be undertaken. There are a number of ways to do this including using the "future scout" list that has been kept when people have shown interest previously. Note that if a recruitment drive is undertaken and then nothing happens for a number of months, people will find other groups or activities.

The promotion should include an information night to demonstrate what Joey Scouts is all about. This is when I can be used to run a program with the interested children to show the parents the types of activities that Joey Scouts do. Generally I leave the end of the program to other leaders (the other leaders from your group) to finish while I explain to parents the features of a Joey Scout mob and what scouting in general is about.

A Joey Scout mob needs at least 6 Joeyes to be registered. Never be satisfied with just 6. Always aim for more.

Features of a Joey Scout Mob

Joey Scouts are boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 8. This section provides an introduction to scouting through a wide range of enjoyable activities. The activities are aimed at helping the Joey Scouts learn about themselves, nature, helping others and finding fun in accordance with the Joey Scout theme.

At this age children need experiences which help them learn to work and play in groups, mix with adults outside home and school environments, and develop their physical, intellectual, social and spiritual abilities through active experiences.

The Joey Scouts form what is called a Mob that is made up of no more than 20 children. The Mob is led by at least two adult leaders. The Mob can then be broken into smaller groups using an ad-hoc approach, as there are no permanent groupings as in other sections (sixes and patrols)

Leaders are not referred to as Mr. or Mrs. but have names from the friends in the Australian bush or Aboriginal names eg. Brolga, Bilby (From Scouts Australia website)

- The Joey scout section meets for one hour per week, during late afternoon or early evening. Their meeting should be concluded by 7:30 p.m.
- The Joey Scout **program** should include such ingredients as activities, games, songs, craft, stories and outings.
- Joey Scouts can also camp and have overnight stays but must have a parent with them. Joey Scout camps are called **Mob holidays**. Joey scouts can also be included in Family or Group camps as long as they are accompanied by a parent.
- Joey Scouts do not work on a badge award scheme. However, there are Challenge Badges, where Mob participation is essential to qualify. These **participation badges** include the environment challenge, the adventure challenge, the buddy badge and the care and share badge.
- The **uniform** for Joey Scouts consists of a dark blue shirt with tan sleeves and collar. They also wear the Group scarf.
- Joey Scout parents are encouraged to assist the Joey Scout leaders in activities in the hall such as craft. As well parents are needed on outings as the ratio for outings is one adult to four children.
- There is a simple standard opening and closing **ceremony** where the Joeys salute the flag and remember their promise, law and theme.

The major hurdle is getting leaders trained quickly before:

1. The “future scouts” lose interest
2. The child moves onto cubs – remember Joey Scouts are only there for 18 months to 2 years. Many parents that train as leaders want to move through the sections when their child does. It is part of spending quality time with the child. Many potential Joey Scout leaders begin by doing BL1 and BL2 and then by the time the BL3 Joeys is due they decide to move up to cubs and do the BL3 cubs instead.

There are ways of shortening the process and retraining a leader from one of the other sections is an alternative. This needs to be thoroughly discussed as not all leaders have the patience for Joey Scouts. It is a very rewarding section but at the same time it is a time consuming section as the programs need to be structured.

If anyone is interested in starting a Joey Scout mob in their group please contact me and we will combine ideas to find the quickest and best way.

The information about Joey Scouts and ideas for recruitment are on www.gwsjoeys.org . There is a link to this site from the Region website.