

## THE “MAGIC CIRCLE”

Cub Scouting is designed for parents to spend time with their children. The volunteer model of our organization is unique when compared to other youth programs and as a result new parents are not necessarily expecting to be asked to volunteer or actively participate. It is vitally important that every parent is asked to serve in a volunteer role at their 1<sup>st</sup> Cub Scout meeting which should be the Parent Orientation Meeting.

Whatever the experience new parents have at the parent orientation meeting, they will typically mimic for the rest of their time in Scouting. For example: if the new parents are engaged and asked to volunteer at their first meeting, then they will continue to volunteer during their entire time in Scouting; whereas if the parents are not asked to volunteer then they tend to never take an active leadership role in the Pack. This behavior tends to continue during their entire time in Scouting.

Recruiting new parents as volunteers at their 1<sup>st</sup> meeting is vital to the long-term success of the Pack. The Magic Circle is a simple and proven way to recruit new parents as volunteers at their 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

### The Magic Circle: Steps to Success

#### 1. Room Set-up:

- It is important that the meeting room for your New Parent Orientation be set up by Tables separated by Dens. Table Tents are available for each of the Dens: Lion, Tiger, Wolf, Bear, Webelos, Arrow of Light for both Boys & Girls.
- As families arrive, welcome them, and ask them to sit in their new Den.

#### 2. Ask Someone at the Den Table to Take Notes / Be the Scribe:

- Ask him/her to write down the vacant positions needing filled. If the Pack has completed the Leadership Needs form, then they will know what key positions are needed.
- Have the scribe list a position for all the adults sitting at the table (nobody gets left out)
  - For example, if 5 people are at the table, list 5 positions.
  - Positions can be: Den Leader, Assistant Den Leader, Pack Committee Member, etc.
- Inform the group that they'll need to have a discussion and decide who will do each job.
  - Just say “We'll let you talk amongst yourselves and well be back in a second”
  - Walk to the next table and repeat the process
  - It is key that you stay away from them and give them time to discuss. If you stand to close they will look to you to make assignments for them.
    - If they ask you questions, answer them, but don't give answers that are to long.
    - For example: If they ask what a Den Leader is? tell them and then add “Don't worry, we have a great Den Leader beginner course that will walk you through it.”
  - Keep encouraging the parents to decide until they have a complete team
- Why this is Important:
  - When these families arrive, they don't know each other **but they need to**. These parents will be in the same Den, they'll need to reach out to each other and support each other. Forcing them to talk to each other helps them start the process of forming a team which will be vitally important for the new Den to have success.
  - Think of it this way, the next meeting these families will have will most likely be their Den Meeting. Will the Cub Master be there? **No**. Will the District Executive be there? **No**. Will the Committee Chair be there? **No**. The only people who will be there are the ones sitting at the table. Getting them to talk to each other and build friendships is vital to keeping them engaged and involved in Scouting.

#### 3. Upon Returning:

- Provide adult applications for the new leaders and explain Youth Protection Training.
- Make sure they have shared their contact information with each other
- Fill out the New Den Roster form and give carbon copies to Cub Master & Committee Chair