



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



VOICE OF THE SCOUT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2012 FALL SURVEY



INTRODUCTION

Launched in Spring 2012, the Voice of the Scout is a member feedback program that aims to systematically capture the experience of Scouts, parents, volunteers and chartering organizations across the United States. By applying member-driven insight, the ultimate goal is to define and generate interactions with Scouting that are so positive and powerful, that subsequent referrals for Scouting are generated. While optional for Councils in 2012, this year, the Voice of the Scout will be nationally-applied as a criterion in the Journey to Excellence performance recognition platform.

This Executive Summary gives a national overview of the reported member experience collected in the Fall of 2012, with comparisons to the Spring where relevant. This information can be considered for broader initiatives, procedures and policy. Further actions or recommendations should be geographically determined, as VOS also gives insight through regions, areas and councils. VOS is structured to give insight to the unit level, with expectations to accomplish this in the future.

Method: The Voice of the Scout is a survey-based approach that applies the Net Promoter Score (NPS) methodology, which essentially measures the degree of customer loyalty held by members of Scouting. The strength of the NPS lies with its simplicity in providing one metric to encapsulate how likely it is that members will recommend Scouting to others. Voice of the Scout also identifies loyalty drivers and provides opportunity for comments to understand more about what is impacting these recommendations.

This method is in full concert with “the main thing”—delivering a quality Scouting experience to a growing membership. By applying NPS, the Boy Scouts of America is trailblazing the path to understand what drives customer loyalty in the non-profit sector.

THE MAIN STORY

The straightforward feedback received about Scouting is that the program endears and strongly resonates. It maintains itself as one of the best-structured programs in the country to guide kids into being productive, responsible young adults. The other component that defines the experience for youth, parents, volunteers and charters is the delivery of the program. The dynamic communities and leaders that facilitate Scouting critically factor into how the program is experienced by members. While the program itself and the delivery of the program are interdependent, they both combine to define what Scouting is to millions of people across the United States.

Changes from Spring 2012 to Fall 2012: At the national membership level, this Fall there were 267 participating councils with 68,441 member respondents, resulting in a 7.7 percent response rate. In the Spring cycle there were less councils (218), more responses (78,829) and a higher response rate (11 percent).

With survey cycles currently set for every six months, there are marked changes in the data from Spring to Fall in every audience. While the Cub Scouts NPS increased by 5.1 percent, other segment audiences declined. The most significant was with Youth-Facing Volunteers where the NPS decreased by 23 percent. All other segment audiences decreased between 10-16 percent.

In seeking explanations for the change, the feedback given for the drivers of Scouting did not significantly change from Spring to Fall. This suggests general expectations of the Scouting experience have not changed. Gaining insight into the shifts therefore need to be mined in the comments. With tens or hundreds of thousands of comments collected for each segment audience this Fall, a more holistic text analysis was focused on Boy Scout Parents, Cub Scout Parents and Youth-Facing Volunteers. These were the “hot topic” trends found in the feedback:

Hot Topic #1: In the text analysis, there is a universal theme across all NPS categories of frustration with the delivery of the program. Most comments reference issues connected to the unit level. This position is reinforced by the following examples:

- The experience as reported by Cub Scout Parents described meetings as too boring, not organized and not fun. Not surprisingly, the number one driver of loyalty for this audience is “Scout meetings are a good use of my son’s time.” While this has improved slightly from the Spring, it continues to be a source of frustration that frequently surfaces.
- Across all NPS categories, leadership and leadership support was cited as being in need of improvement for both Boy Scout Parent and Youth-Facing Volunteer segments, while sentiment about the program needing improvement yielded very few negative comments.
- For Boy Scout Parents, two delivery-oriented drivers both decreased in agreement with *opportunity to be a leader and a good use of my son’s time*.
- Information collected in the Spring cycle reveal these same frustrations, which begins to solidify confidence in the data to make decisions.

Bottom Line:

- Youth-facing volunteer continued requests for support with on-boarding and mentoring is a challenge for leadership at all levels of the organization to address.
- Inconsistent delivery issues for parents are appearing with similar frequency found in the “more support in onboarding and mentoring” for volunteers. This may have a cause-effect relationship.
- Very little on these issues have changed from the Spring cycle. Respondents have strongly communicated that something was amiss in the Spring and this was reinforced with the feedback this past Fall.
- The undertone suggests the need for the organization to re-assert itself to the basics of the Scouting program. In focusing on the development of children into responsible, capable and caring young adults, the requirement is having adult leaders who strive for the best in doing so.

Hot Topic #2: Specific reference to the membership standards policy increased in all segments except the Cub Scouts. With national attention placed on the reaffirmation policy this summer this perhaps is to be expected. Of note: Promoters rarely commented on the issue, perhaps since the reinforcement of the policy did not put the current status at risk.

- Conservative estimates assign a 15:1 ratio of negative to positive comments about the existing membership standards policy.
- Comments from those who are remaining in the program are doing so in spite of disagreement regarding membership standards. Isolated, the program continues to be described as “wonderful” and “one of the better programs” to instill skills and values.
- The volume was meaningful with Passives and Detractors, with the latter seeing an increase in volume. A significant number of these comments are suggesting that this issue has negatively impacted their perception and/or relationship with Scouting.



DRILL DOWN: THE SEVEN SEGMENT AUDIENCE

While many councils work to increase responses in the coming cycles, the national findings outlined below may connect to issues that have yet to be qualified at the local level. While councils work independently to dig down into their members' common issues, this feedback may help reinforce what has only been anecdotally understood in the meanwhile.

CUB SCOUTS: AN NPS OF 40.9%.

What drives loyalty: *Cub Scouting is really fun. I learn new things in my den meetings.*

A bright spot in the Fall were these young men, as the segment audience showing the only positive increase in NPS (by 5 percent). There was also a 9 percent increase in the driver question "We have great outdoor activities in Cub Scouts." Albeit, the benefit of timing could help this increase, coming off the summer months and warmer Fall days when the surveys were released. While Spring & Fall open comments cited meetings as boring, there was a very slight uptick in agreement in "learning new things in den meetings," being "excited for my next rank" and that "Cub Scouting is really fun."

What gets in the way: In the Spring cycle, we found that bullying exists, with 27% as being neutral or disagreeing that "Boys in my Cub Scout group are not mean to each other." This driver did not improve in the Fall. Correspondingly, some Cub Scout parents take note of unorganized meetings being connected to behavioral issues, which may be a first step in creating welcoming, friendly and productive environments.

The Big Picture: Keeping Cub Scouts having fun, engaged and learning makes a big difference.

BOY SCOUTS/VENTURERS: AN NPS OF 29.8%.

What drives loyalty: *Being in Scouting makes me feel like I am part of something bigger. Our meetings are a good use of my time.*

An essential component of VOS is being able to connect to members. From this perspective the number of emails registered tripled this Fall. Addressing this audience's concerns would serve well to move the national average up, as this segment reports the 2nd lowest NPS of all segments, with a 12 percent drop from the Spring cycle. The movement was a direct reduction of Promoters to a proportionate increase in Setractors. Passives stayed the same. The membership standards policy appeared in 25 percent of all comments left by Passives and Detractors. It did not surface in Promoter comments to any meaningful measurement.

What gets in the way: "Being in Scouting makes me feel like I am part of something bigger" is the only driver that dropped in agreement for this segment, yet it still has a very high influence on loyalty. National membership standards policy may also be clouding the Scout connection to what that "something bigger" truly is to these members. Increased social & political awareness will amplify the need to reinforce Scouting as a program to develop caring, capable and responsible adults if / when the membership standards policy gains broad scrutiny.

The Big Picture: Recognizing how the values of Scouting can be applied in the local community will keep Boy Scouts/Venturers aligned with the benefits of the program.



CUB SCOUT PARENTS: AN NPS OF 28%

What drives loyalty: Scout meetings are a good use of my son's time. Scouting is constantly reinforcing worthwhile values for my son.

While the Spring to Fall NPS decline is 10 percent, this is less than the average decline of other segments. While there was a slight uptick in agreement that "meetings are a good use of my son's time," the number one area for comment still is about improving the meetings.

What gets in the way: In the bottom NPS categories, the large majority of people (30 percent of Passives and 74 percent of Detractors) are citing negative comments about the experience, specifically with Cub Scouts being disappointing, not organized, boring, not fun. In relation to this tone, suggestions surfaced for more rigorous leader selections.

The Big Picture: How skills and values of Scouting are delivered matters greatly to Cub Scout Parents.



BOY SCOUT/VENTURER PARENTS: AN NPS OF 29.8%

What drives loyalty: Scouting reinforces worthwhile values for my son. Scouting is the best program around to help youth become successful in life.

The key driver, "Scouting reinforces worthwhile values for my son" did not enter in the top two drivers of the Spring cycle. This registers a shift in what is driving loyalty for this parent segment. While promoters did not comment much on values, Passives and Detractors measurably did. Albeit, promoter engagement surrounding the "values" topic may have been different if the membership standards policy were at risk. A decrease in agreement was measured in the #2 value driver "helping youth become successful in life" from Spring to Fall. Such shifts when combined with the NPS drop of -16 percent suggest a de-stabilization of this segment's relationship with Scouting.

What gets in the way: Leadership needs to be trained to empower the Boy Scouts and give them bona fide opportunities to lead. The summer spotlight seems to have greatly impacted Detractors, as the membership standards policy was mentioned 42 percent of the time in their comments. This volume is significant enough to warrant further discovery as it may be a key factor in the NPS decline for parents of Boy Scouts / Venturers.

The Big Picture: For Boy Scout/Venturer Parents, closer values alignment between family and institutions become more important as boys mature.



YOUTH-FACING VOLUNTEERS: AN NPS OF 33.5%

What drives loyalty: *I understand the unique benefits that Scouting provided to today's youth. I have support from other leaders that helps me be an effective Scout leader.*

This segment dropped the most in the Fall, with a decline of 23 percent. Detractors of Scouting increased 36 percent. There was also decreased agreement in all seven driver questions. With 24,780 responses to contribute, a relative de-stabilization seems to be occurring, with increased risk to the brand of Scouting due to the sizable jump of Detractors. "Understanding the unique benefits of Scouting..." became 11 percent more impactful this Fall, which supports the need to strongly align training & interactions to reinforce the core basics when administering the Scouting program. Simplification of training materials, effective mentoring and streamlining the time needed for meetings and roundtables were relayed in open comments.

What gets in the way: Less than 1 in 3 volunteers agree that roundtables help them be an effective leader. In context, they believe irrelevant information is being delivered, which is also consuming time that they can't afford to spend. The mixing of Cub Scout and Boy Scout roundtables has been cited as ineffective in both the Spring and the Fall cycles. Many Youth-Facing Volunteers want more leadership training to effectively prepare them before they meet with kids.

The Big Picture: *The Youth-Facing Volunteers are most responsible for generating excitement about Scouting, yet also experienced the biggest drop in NPS: There is a sense of urgency to understand more.*

DISTRICT/COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS: AN NPS OF 50%

What drives loyalty: *I understand the unique benefits that Scouting provided to today's youth. I feel the council today is very responsive to Scout volunteer needs.*

Spring to Fall recorded email addresses tripled, which allows for a better foundation to connect to this audience in the near future. With this segment's role in other JTE criteria, understanding more from them could have impact beyond VOS as well.

What gets in the way: "Understanding the unique benefits of Scouting" is increasingly more important in impact to loyalty, yet it decreased in agreement for this audience. In delivering the program more attention should be paid to being responsive to Scout volunteer needs, as this also decreased in agreement.

The Big Picture: *In administering programs, delivering the quality of Scouting to youth means being responsive to Council/District Volunteers and effectively assisting them when needed.*





CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS: AN NPS OF 48.1%

What drives loyalty: *Scouting has provided a way for my organization to make an impact in the lives of youth. Our local council has made sponsoring a Scouting group simple and easy.*

The lowest drop in NPS was with Chartered Organizations, at 9.1 percent. The key driver is to make Scouting “simple and easy,” yet it decreased in impacting loyalty by 17 percent from Spring to Fall. Reasons may include Chartered Organizations having less issue with meeting national requirements joined by an increased focus on the local-level interactions. One-third however did suggest their local council could do a better job in interacting with them. For this segment, there were very few mentions about the membership standards policy.

What gets in the way: Increased pertinence in communication would likely improve the relationship with this segment, as would streamlined processes for re-chartering. The latter also appeared as a needed improvement in the Spring.

The Big Picture- Simplicity in administering the program, with focus on maximizing its impact matters most to Chartered Organizations.

FINAL NOTE

In communicating the findings of the data, this effort would be remiss to not report upon the number of membership standards policy comments left by every segment audience except Cub Scouts. Due to the relative insignificant shifts in the driver questions as a whole, this policy may be factoring into declines in NPS. Therefore, continued monitoring and tracking of how membership standards impacts loyalty is warranted.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH: THE VOICE OF THE SCOUT SURVEYS ARE SENT OUT TO MEMBERS WITH VALID EMAIL ADDRESSES EVERY SPRING AND FALL. RESEARCH FINDINGS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AFTER EACH SURVEY CYCLE. ALL VOS REPORTS ARE POSTED AT WWW.Scouting.org/JTE IN THE VOICE OF THE SCOUT SECTION. COUNCILS CAN ACCESS THEIR INFORMATION ON THE VOS DASHBOARD.

NET PROMOTER, NPS, AND NET PROMOTER SCORE ARE TRADEMARKS OF SATMETRIX SYSTEMS, INC., BAIN + COMPANY, AND FRED REICHHELD. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VOICE OF THE SCOUT CONTACT BSA MISSION IMPACT TEAM AT JTE@Scouting.org





2012 FALL VOICE OF THE SCOUT HIGHLIGHTS

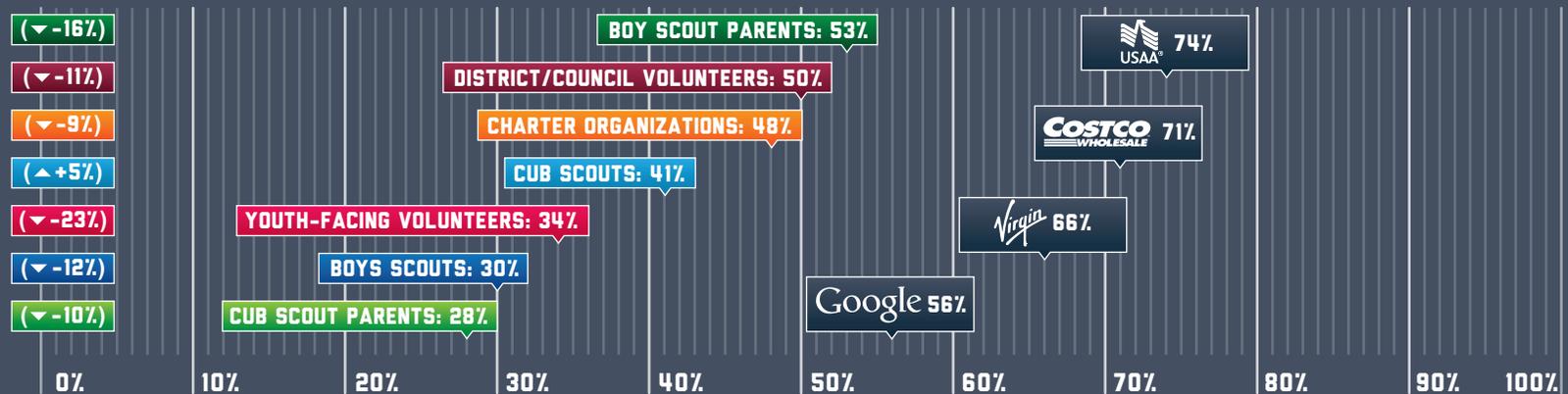
The Voice of the Scout (VOS) inaugural member feedback program launched in March 2012, in a first-ever effort to hear what Scouts, parents, volunteers and chartering organizations are experiencing across 267 participating councils. Using the Net Promoter Score methodology, the Voice of the Scout both measures and reveals what is driving members to refer Scouting to others. The ultimate goal of the Voice of the Scout is to create experiences so positive and powerful that subsequent referrals and positive word of mouth lead to accomplishing "the main thing"... membership growth.

This summary provides highlights from the Fall cycle, with comparisons to the Spring cycle where appropriate.

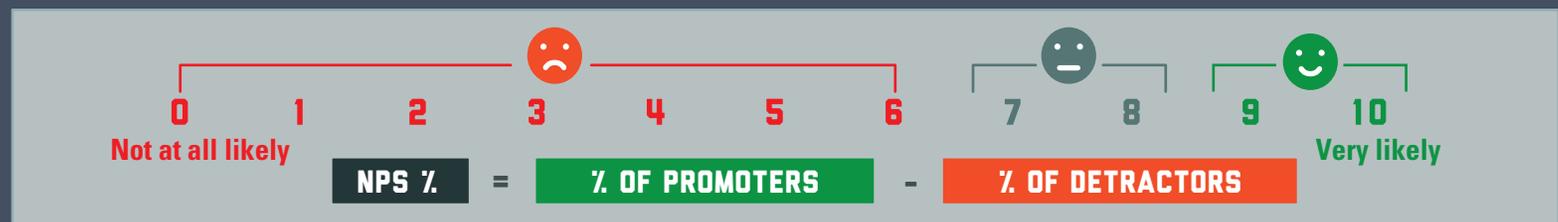
WHAT IS THE SENTIMENT OF OUR MEMBERS?

NATIONAL NPS™
41%

NPS is a metric that captures loyalty to Scouting, qualified by likelihood that members would recommend the program to their friends and family. An NPS of 41% is representative of Scouting's success and challenges, as it factors in both Promoters and Detractors into the equation. Understanding what impacts loyalty for each NPS group will give leaders a powerful management tool to deliver an exceptional Scouting experience to a growing membership.



"How likely are you to recommend Scouting to friends or family?"



To see your council's NPS score, go to the Voice of the Scout Dashboard on myscouting.org

Those who are highly likely to recommend Scouting to others are considered "Promoters" by responding to the loyalty question with a 9 or 10. Survey respondents who are wavering score Scouting at 7 or 8 and are classified as "Passively Satisfied," and "Detractors" are those who score Scouting at 0-6 and would most likely not recommend Scouting.



WHAT IS DRIVING LOYALTY AND WHAT IS GETTING IN THE WAY?



CUB SCOUTS AND THEIR PARENTS

The percentage of Cub Scouts who agree Scouting is about having fun



The percentage of parents who agree Scouting reinforces worthwhile values



PASSIVES

The percentage of parents citing negative comments about the experience "boring, not organized, disappointing, not satisfied and not fun"



DETRACTORS

BOY SCOUTS AND THEIR PARENTS

#1 loyalty driver for parents is Scouting reinforces **WORTHWHILE VALUES.**

#1 area of improvement for parents is **LEADERSHIP.**

The percentage of Boy Scouts who agree that being in Scouting makes me feel like I am part of something bigger than myself



The percentage of 1,325 comments provided by Boy Scouts & their parents stating that the reaffirmation of the membership policy negatively impacted their loyalty.

VOLUNTEERS



One in three agree that roundtables are effective

The percentage of youth-facing volunteers and district/council volunteers who understand the unique benefits of Scouting



The percentage of 3,444 comments provided by Volunteers stating that the reaffirmation of the membership policy negatively impacted their loyalty.



Number of loyalty driver questions that decreased, All 7 suggesting a de-stabilization in the youth-facing volunteer relationship.



CHARTERED ORGS

The percentage who agree sponsoring a Scouting group is simple and easy



1
THIRD

did however suggest their local council could do a better job interacting with them.

TAKEAWAYS:

Confidence in the Scouting program remains high. Feedback to improve the delivery continues to be number one priority, with measurable concerns voiced regarding the membership standards policy.



WHO DID WE HEAR FROM?



68,441 RESPONDENTS

7.7%
RESPONSE RATE

SPRING 2012

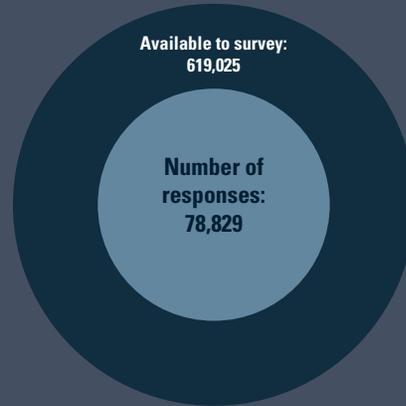
RESPONSE RATE

YOUTH **5%**

PARENTS **6%**

VOLUNTEERS **11%**

CHARTER ORGS **13%**



RESPONSE RATE: 11.1%

FALL 2012

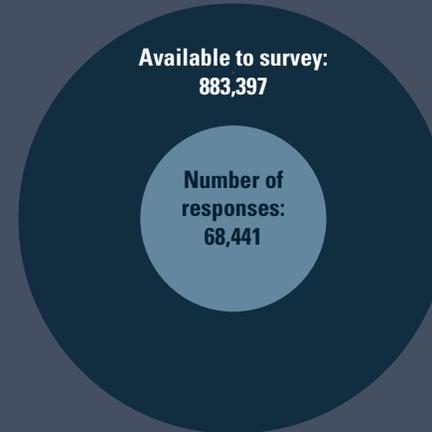
RESPONSE RATE

YOUTH **3%**

PARENTS **5%**

VOLUNTEERS **7%**

CHARTER ORGS **9%**



RESPONSE RATE: 7.7%



HOW DO COUNCILS IMPROVE THEIR SCORE?



INCREASE THE VOLUME OF RESPONSES BY

- Gathering more email addresses to increase the email saturation to above 60%
- Promoting the Spring 2013 cycle to drive response rate, in order to hit our 15% goal. Materials are provided at scouting.org/jte



TAKE ACTION ON FEEDBACK FROM THE FALL

- Log into your Council's VOS dashboard to ...
- Look for one or two actions to take in segments with the lowest NPS
- Read the segment comments for themes and additional insight



WHO IS DELIVERING THE BEST SCOUTING EXPERIENCE?



18

ELITE COUNCILS

Those that achieved Gold benchmarks and 11% (or more) responded, achieving the national response rate.

68

GOLD COUNCILS

60% or more of members have email addresses in PAS = Silver JTE

45% or higher council NPS score = Gold JTE

- Abraham Lincoln: Springfield, IL
- Alamo Area: San Antonio, TX
- Andrew Jackson: Jackson, MS
- Anthony Wayne Area: Fort Wayne, IN
- Bay Area: Galveston, TX
- Black Swamp Area: Findlay, OH
- Blue Grass: Lexington, KY
- Blue Ridge: Greenville, SC
- Bucktail: DuBois, PA
- Burlington County: Rancocas, NJ
- Calcasieu Area: Lake Charles, LA
- Capitol Area: Austin, TX
- Catalina: Tuscon, AZ
- Central Georgia: Macon, GA
- Central New Jersey: Princeton, NJ
- Chattahoochee: Columbus, GA
- Cherokee Area #469: Bartleville OK
- Cherokee Area #556: Chattanooga, TN
- Cimarron: Enid, OK
- Coastal Carolina: Charleston, SC
- Columbia-Montour: Bloomsburg, PA
- Connecticut Yankee: Milford, CT
- Conquistador: Roswell, NM
- Crossroads of America: Indianapolis, IN
- Daniel Boone: Asheville, NC
- Del-Mar-Va: Wilmington, DE
- East Carolina: Kinston, NC
- Flint River: Griffin, GA
- French Creek: Erie, PA

- Great Smoky Mountain: Knoxville, TN
- Great Trail: Akron, OH
- Greater Western Reserve: Warren, OH
- Heart of America: Kansas City, MO
- Hoosier Trails: Bloomington, IN
- Inland Northwest: Spokane, WA
- Istrouma Area: Baton Rouge, LA
- Jersey Shore: Toms River, NJ
- Juniata Valley: Reedsville, PA
- La Salle: South Bend, IN
- Last Frontier: Oklahoma City, OK
- Lincoln Heritage: Louisville, KY
- Lincoln Trails: Decatur, IL
- Long Beach Area: Long Beach, CA
- Los Padres: Santa Barbara, CA
- Louisiana Purchase: Monroe, LA
- Mecklenburg County: Charlotte, NC
- Minsi Trails: Lehigh Valley, PA
- Monmouth: Morganville, NJ
- Montana: Great Falls, MT
- NeTseO Trails: Paris, TX
- New Birth of Freedom: Mechanicsburg, PA
- North Florida: Jacksonville, FL
- Northeast Illinois: Highland Park, IL
- Northeastern Pennsylvania: Moosic, PA
- Northern New Jersey: Oakland, NJ
- Occoneechee: Raleigh, NC
- Ohio River Valley: Wheeling, WV
- Otschodela: Oneonta, NY

- Overland Trails: Grand Island, NE
- Ozark Trails: Springfield, MO
- Palmetto: Spartanburg, SC
- Piedmont: Gastonia, NC
- Pony Express: St. Joseph, MO
- Potawatomi Area: Waukesha, WI
- Potomac: Cumberland, MD
- Rio Grande: Harlingen, TX
- Rocky Mountain: Pueblo, CO
- Samoset: Weston, WI
- Shenandoah Area: Winchester, VA
- Silicon Valley Monterey Bay: San Jose, CA
- South Florida: Miami Lakes, FL
- South Georgia: Valdosta, GA
- South Texas: Corpus Christi, TX
- Southeast Louisiana: Metairie, LA
- Southern Sierra: Bakersfield, CA
- Southwest Florida: Fort Myers, FL
- Stonewall Jackson Area: Waynesboro, VA
- Texas Southwest: San Angelo, TX
- Three Rivers: Beaumont, TX
- Transatlantic: Livorno, IT
- Ventura County: Camarillo, CA
- Voyageurs Area: Hermantown, MN
- West Central Florida: Seminole, FL
- West Tennessee Area: Jackson, TN
- Westark Area: Fort Smith, AR
- Yocona Area: Tupelo, MS

DETRACTOR COMMENT



WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?



PROMOTER COMMENT

YOUTH

"I like scouts because I get to do things with my friends like shoot rockets and fish and campout."

"Most of my friends were in Boy Scouts but quit because they were getting bored because we were doing the same over and over again."

"Scouts is not a 'cool' thing for students to know about you at school unless they are your close friends."

"Scouting has changed my life in so many positive ways and has taught me countless life skills. Scouting has also helped me form great friendships."

PARENTS

"Scouting provides so many opportunities and experiences. The leadership benefits for the boys are unmatched."

"Is it the BEST? Not with the policy of exclusion in place."

"Good program for the boys but the cost, fundraising, and financial commitment is too much."

"It gets confusing learning about different policies and ways to earn the badges and awards."

"This program has been wonderful for my son's development and confidence. He has learned so much and continues to do so."

VOLUNTEERS

"There are no other organizations that teach these skills and values."

"The benefits are helping children. However, the downfall is it is a lot of work and extremely time consuming."

"Requires significant commitment of time and effort."

"BSA is an amazing organization - you get a satisfaction helping kids - but there is also so much training and mentoring offered for adults that it really enriches your life."

CHARTER ORGS

"Extremely good program for character development and personal growth for kids in our area."

"I love the program but hate the bureaucracy."

"Scouting is a good program and any organization should be proud to charter a scout pack."

"The Boy Scout policy on gay and lesbian adults and their children is a barrier for me to recommend your organization to others."