



WEBELOS to BOY SCOUT TRANSITION

More boys drop out of Scouting in the transition from Webelos to Boy Scouting than in any other single year of either the Cub Scouting or Boy Scouting programs. This is an alarming statistic and a source of great concern to both Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders.

In some cases, the Webelos program in the boy's Cub Scout pack may fail to adequately prepare the boy for the move into Boy Scouting. Scouts at the 4th and 5th grade levels are beginning to become more self-sufficient and capable of doing for themselves. Most boys at this age are ready to venture into the outdoors and experience hiking, camping, campfire cooking, and other traditional scout activities at a level of challenge appropriate to their abilities. While they may not be ready for week-long backpacking trips, shorter hikes or campouts are certainly appropriate and encouraged. Part of the goal of the Webelos program in Cub Scouting is to introduce boys to outdoor activities that aren't too rugged or overly challenging. The intent is to show them the kinds of fun they can have as Boy Scouts, not scare them away.

Another reason boys may not make a successful transition from Cub Scouting into Boy Scouting is difficulty in finding an active, local Troop. Boys are not required to join any particular troop, including a troop that may meet at the same church or school as their Cub Scout pack. Webelos scouts and their parents should plan to visit at least two different troops to personally observe the differences between units and select one that best suits the interests of their son. Every boy is different just as every troop is different ... the unit that's right for other boys in your son's Webelos den may not be the best fit for your son. Don't worry about "everybody crossing over together." That's the WORST reason to pick one particular troop over another. Your son is going to make plenty of new friends in whatever troop he chooses, just as he makes friends going to a different church or school than his Cub Scouting friends may attend. Certainly friendships are one factor to consider, but chances are his best friend in 5th grade isn't going to still be his best friend in high school, so why would you pick a troop on the sole basis of what a friend does?



Boy Scout Troop 868 is the oldest Boy Scout troop in Shepherdsville. We also happen to think our program is second to none. Troop 868 is widely regarded as being one of the most active and best-run troops in the entire Lincoln Heritage Council. Extensive information about Troop 868 may be found on our website, www.troop868.com, including stories and photos of troop outings and activities dating back to the troop's founding.

Several times during the year, Troop 868 invites Webelos from area Cub Scout packs to participate with us in various activities that are appropriate for younger, less experienced campers or hikers. Every year in January, we host a winter cabin camping trip that is specifically designed with Webelos in mind and the entire weekend program caters to them. We strongly encourage Webelos parents to allow their sons to participate in these "preparatory" outings so that their son will gain an understanding of how the Boy Scouting program works and look forward to continuing his trek up the *Eagle Trail* when the time comes to bid farewell to Cub Scouting.

Scoutmaster Bob Meek is always more than happy to talk to parents. His number is 502-964-5270.