



Welcome to Troop 20!



Troop 20 is Williamsburg's first, and so far only, Scouts BSA girls troop. We started on March 4, 2019 and are chartered by King of Glory Lutheran Church. We welcome all girls between the ages of 11-17, grades 6-12, who want to experience and learn from scouting within a supportive and friendly environment.

It is the aim of Troop 20 and Scouting to build citizens of character. We wish to give them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to blaze their own trail and aim for whatever their lifelong passion(s) may be. They will grow along the way and they will learn the resilience and self-confidence to enable them to grow into the leaders our world needs.

Our scouts have to be able to find the information they need, build solid foundations for a life lived in character, build the skills that will help them navigate this exceptionally complex world, and reach their highest potential.

We'll be with them every step of the way.

WEBELOS/ARROW OF LIGHT TRANSITION

Many of our Scouts transition as Webelos shortly after earning their Arrow of Light. Experience in Cub Scouts is excellent preparation for Scouts BSA. Sometimes this transition can be awkward for the Scout, and we ask for parents' help to ease this process. In Cub Scouts, the parents are THE driving force for meetings, advancement, and all things program-related and that leadership structure is intuitively obvious to them.

In Scouts BSA, the Scouts must learn to approach their own leadership to accomplish their goals. Advancement is no longer driven by an adult and it will be up to your scout to be responsible for making it happen. Most importantly, know that for all the similarities, it's **not Cub Scouts anymore**; the scouts must take ownership for their own advancement. We will help them as often as they need it, but they must want to succeed. We look forward to helping them reach their goals.

Parents who are accustomed to being deeply involved in their Scout's experiences in Cub Scouting must learn to step back. Your Scout still needs your help, but it's different now. They need to go out, make mistakes and learn from them - in an environment that allows them to grow. This means you have to let them make mistakes. It's all going to turn out ok.

The 8 METHODS OF SCOUTING

Troop 20 seeks to develop young women into the citizens, leaders, parents, and partners of the future, through cultivating the critical aspects of Character, Citizenship, and Mental, Emotional and Physical Fitness. We do this by implementing the 8 Methods of Scouting.

1. **IDEALS:** The ideals of Scouting are spelled out in the Scout Oath, the Scout Law, the Scout motto, and the Scout slogan. The Scout measures themselves against these ideals and continually tries to improve. The goals are high, and, as they reach for them, they have control over what and who they become.
2. **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Troop 20 is scout-led, meaning the Scouts are responsible for developing the activities, program content, and service activities under the safe guidance of the Adult Leaders. Scouts will develop and practice leadership skills in a variety of activities where they are allowed to learn by failing. It is only when they are given true responsibilities that they can learn these skills.
3. **ADULT ASSOCIATION:** Scouts learn a lot from adults just by watching how they conduct themselves. While the troop is Scout-led, it is through adult interaction and mentorship that the Scouts are given the tools to succeed.
4. **PERSONAL GROWTH AND SERVICE:** As Scouts plan their activities and progress toward their goals, they experience personal growth. The Good Turn concept is a major part of the personal growth method of Scouting. Young people grow as they participate in community service projects and do Good Turns for others. Probably no device is so successful in developing a basis for personal growth as the daily Good Turn.
5. **ADVANCEMENT:** Scouting provides a series of surmountable obstacles and steps in overcoming them through the advancement method. The Scout plans their advancement and progresses at their own pace as they meet each challenge. The Scout is rewarded for each achievement, which helps them gain self-confidence. The steps in the advancement system help a Scout grow in self-reliance and in the ability to help others.
6. **PATROL METHOD:** Lord Baden Powell, the founder of Scouting, once wrote, "The patrol system is not one method in which Scouting can be carried on. It is the only method." The patrol method allows Scouts to interact in small groups where they can easily relate to each other. These small groups determine Troop activities through their elected representatives and places responsibility on young shoulders and teaches scouts how to accept it.
7. **OUTDOORS:** Outings provide a forum for scouts to practice the skills and knowledge that they learn at Troop meetings. The challenges scouts face while being outdoors are often unpredictable and complex - allowing them to develop critical problem solving skills. Time outdoors and away from the constant connectivity of modern life offers scouts the opportunity to develop confidence, skills, and friendships that can last a lifetime.
8. **UNIFORM:** The Scout Uniform is a visible, outward sign of the good that the Troop does in the community. Uniforms display the ranks and positions they have earned and offer a way to assert both their individuality and their place as part of the World Scouting movement.

TROOP 20 CULTURE

PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Our Troop's attitude towards personal phones and electronics is one of skeptical tolerance. We *answer our phones*, we do not *answer to our phones*. Constant connectivity is a challenging reality in today's world. We have phones and digital devices that chime, chirp, sing, and do all manner of various digital gyrations to keep our attention. Troop 20 views these devices like a tool or a knife; when used properly they are a valuable asset but when used inappropriately they can hurt or have negative consequences. We also believe that there is value in disconnecting and enjoying nature and each other's company.

UNIFORM

The uniform is one of the methods of scouting. We encourage our scouts to wear their uniform and to take pride in it. As with everything else, common sense rules when it comes to safety and weather.

Class A with Sash: Hat, khaki shirt, neckerchief with slide, pants/shorts, belt, socks, practical footwear + merit badge sash. Normally worn to a Board of Review, Court of Honor, community engagement, or event with another pack/troop, like a Bridging Ceremony.

Class A or Field Uniform: Worn to meetings, to/from events, and at special events at campouts - typically dinner and campfires.

Class B: Like the Class A, but with the troop t-shirt instead of button-down uniform shirt. Sometimes if we're meeting outside and it's really hot, the SPL will authorize Class B.

Summer Camp Daily: Troop t-shirt, any other scouting t-shirt, or a blue t-shirt. Wearing royal blue helps us recognize our scouts from far away.

Swimming: Practical swimsuits. We jump out of boats, climb in boats, swing on ropes and climb up floats. Pick out a swimsuit that will be tough and durable.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE

The best communication is face-to-face at a meeting, on a hike, or around a campfire. We do have a number of other options available to us.

- Google Groups (Troop 20 Williamsburg): The primary way we disseminate a lot of information quickly. This is open to anyone with an e-mail who wants to be on the list.
- FaceBook (Scouts BSA Troop 20 For Girls, Williamsburg, VA): Used to post information of general interest in the scouting community as well as fun photos of the troop at scouting activities. Open to anyone who wants to join, but you will have to get permission to post for the first time (usually pretty quick).
- Instagram (williamsburgtroop20): Used for distributing photos. Very popular with the scouts.
- ScoutBook: The digital database of record. Used for everything from activity logs to advancement records to calendars. Link the ScoutBook calendar to your digital device of choice to stay up to date on everything that's going on.

- E-mail: We email a lot.
- Text: We text a lot.

MEETINGS

We meet every Monday night at 7:00pm. We try to end by 8:15pm because it's a school night. If there is a holiday (like Memorial or Labor Day weekends), we will meet with a light schedule because we know not all of the troop will be there. We will cancel for exceptionally bad weather or major holidays.

KNIVES, HATCHETS, SAWS and AXES

Scouts can use knives and other camp tools after they earn their Tot'n Chip Card. This is a privilege that can be revoked if used unsafely. Sheath knives are neither encouraged or discouraged. Some camps have more restrictive rules when it comes to knives and Troop 20 will follow these rules when they apply.

YOUTH PROTECTION

For the safety of all involved, Youth Protection Training (YPT) is required for ALL adult leaders who come into contact with scouts as part of an activity and encouraged for all parents. It is available online as a Computer-Based Training for free. There are many parts, but the two most important rules are

- 1) No 1 on 1 private contact between Adults and Youth "No 1 on 1"
- 2) All events must include at least two adults (one female) "Two Deep Leadership"

SUMMER CAMP

Lord Baden-Powell wrote, "A week of camp life is worth six months of theoretical teaching in the meeting room." We STRONGLY encourage all new scouts to go to camp. It is not only an opportunity to earn merit badges, but it also solidifies the friendships that will last during their Scouting experience. Ask any of our scouts - summer camp is their most formative experience.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The troop CANNOT function without the help of adults. We readily and graciously welcome Parents into Troop 20 in a variety of different roles. You can volunteer for a variety of positions - everything from "once a year" events to camping every month. We do ask that parents maintain a certain distance from their scouts, especially during the early months of their joining. For Scouting to work, the scout MUST learn to rely on the PATROL METHOD to solve its problems. The first 12 months is critical for the child to look to the Patrol Leader instead of Mom or Dad. As adults, we intervene when necessary, but if we do it too much, we damage their self-reliance.

ATTENDANCE

There is no minimum attendance to be a member of Troop 20. If you can make one meeting a year, we're happy to have you. Understand though, that in order to get the most out of the program your child needs to be here working on advancement, scout skills, and relationships.

These things don't just happen; they're developed during outings, meetings, and the chaotic space of growing up. If your scout misses meetings and campouts they will miss out on fun!

FUNDRAISING

Troop 20 does a minimal amount of fundraising - we're here to go scouting! Fundraising events are a way to purchase or replace camping equipment; defray costs of summer camp for the whole Troop; and Scout Leader registrations/training.

MERIT BADGES

Merit badges are opportunities for scouts to investigate over 120 different areas of knowledge or skills, some of which are required to earn the rank of Eagle. These can be hobbies, (e.g., kayaking) professions, (e.g., welding) or life skills and scout skills (e.g., camping, Citizenship in the Community). These badges must be earned from registered Adult Merit Badge Counselors.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much does Scouting cost?

No scout will ever be denied the opportunity to participate in scouting because of a lack of funds. Talk to the Scoutmaster, Committee Chair, or another leader if funding is an issue for your family.

Troop 20 tries to run a very thrifty scouting program. We camp as often as we can in places that do not charge a fee and we utilize a 100% volunteer workforce. We also have a collection of uniform pieces and gear that are available to families who are concerned with the high up-front costs. There are four main areas where there is a fee associated.

- Campouts and outings: Each campout is \$20 depending to pay for the scout's food and camp fees.
- Equipment fee: New scouts pay an equipment fee that goes towards their neckerchief, troop hat, and troop t-shirt.
- Dues: Dues are \$51/annually. We ask that the scout "earn" that money by helping out at home or doing a particular chore. This money is used for patches, insignia, equipment replacement, and troop supplies.
- Recharter: Once a year Troop 20 must register with the Council to ensure that we stay supported by the Scouts BSA. This ensures that your leaders are properly trained and that liability insurance for the Troop is covered.
- Summer Camp/ High Adventure: Camp fees can be offset through fundraising participation. Typically around \$400 for the week-long session.
- Uniform and equipment for your scout - this varies, but don't think you need to go out and buy a bunch of gear right away. You will be set for the next few birthdays and holidays!

What gear should I buy for my scout?

(Check out the Scouting Resources Page on the website for a first-time packing list)

Need for first campout

- Bowl, cup, fork and spoon to eat
- Water bottle
- Good shoes that can get wet and mucky
- Sleeping bag & pillow. If this is a 'sleepover' sleeping bag and it will be below 60 degrees at night, a blanket is a very good idea to wrap around the bag. Experienced campers often ditch or improvise the pillow, but it is a nice comfort for the uninitiated
- Foam sleeping pad. Well worth the \$10 at WalMart.
- Rain gear- need not be fancy but have a poncho or raincoat ready if needed.

Will need in first couple months

- Official BSA uniform (one T20 blue t-shirt comes with troop dues, but tan formal 'class A' shirt has to be bought online or ordered from scout store in Newport News, Richmond, or Virginia Beach)
 - Order bigger than you think- the scout will outgrow child sizes really fast.
 - Troop 20 Uniform Closet - open 2nd Monday of each month at Troop meetings. These are gently used Class A's, Class B's, belts, pants for sharing to all Scouts. The Closet Manager will also accept any donations at this time.
- Real meal kit - sold in a mesh bag for easy drying. Go simple- cup, bowl, plate is all that is needed. Buy a spork or borrow one from Taco Bell.
- Hiking boots- these are \$ well spent- and brace yourself that these scouts will outgrow them soon.
- Pocket knife- you can do well for a long time with an inexpensive model.
- Compass- again, not pricey at WalMart.
- Rope- I like to keep 25ish feet of parachute cord in my pack.

Will need eventually

- 'Real' backcountry gear
 - Backpack
 - Sleeping bag

Don't worry about:

- T20 has troop tents. Don't buy your own.
- T20 has troop stoves. Don't buy one.

Where to buy

- Camping section at WalMart - it is cheap and easy
- Hiker Direct for sleeping bags and packs. It is a scouting co-op for gear and has really good prices.
- REI Co-op for clearance sales - high quality gear at reasonable prices for the patient.

How can I help?

The only way this program works is through adult volunteers. How you help depends on your interests and availability.

- *I want to help but adults drive me crazy:* Assistant Scoutmasters go on outings and mentor the troop leadership to make sure they have the tools to make the program work.
- *I want to help but the Scouts drive me crazy:* Committee members work to keep the Troop running behind the scenes. This is a great place to help if you don't like camping or your schedule doesn't allow you to camp.
- *I like camping but my schedule keeps me from committing:* We generally need at least 3 adults and one must be a female leader to have a campout. Parents must be registered and YPT trained to go on campouts.
- *I have a skill and hobbies and I'd like to share them:* Merit Badge Counselors are always in demand. It's a great way to impart some of your passion to the next generation.
- *I like to plan events, but my day-job has sporadic bursts of business:* Then we could use you to plan fundraisers, Court of Honor, Eagle Charge, Christmas Parade, Christmas Party, or any number of activities!

At what pace should my Scout be advancing?

Scouting is different. There's a level of personal responsibility that they likely NEVER EXPERIENCED before. Our kids grow up in an educational and domestic environment where in many cases they are told what to read and when to study. Advancement is an important part of scouting; it offers the scout the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge he has developed on his journey at the pace of their choosing. More importantly, it fosters their own intrinsic drive to advance for their own sake. If your daughter is not advancing, ask them why. The trail to Eagle will have MANY hours spent on Scouting outside of our meetings and outings.

IN CONCLUSION

Welcome Aboard! We founded Troop 20 in 2019 so that girls like yours can get outdoors, have fun, discover new interests, interact with adults that are neither their parents nor teacher, and meet new friends. This is a great troop, your scout will love it and the other scouts are ready to welcome her in.