



Recruiting volunteers using family camps

What. Why. How.

Why?

By inviting and involving adults you could recruit more adult volunteers for your Group, or at least get more commitment from the adults who currently help.

When adults are invited on camp, they get to experience the fun of Scouts first-hand, they make friends and feel part of the community. We've found that 45% of new section leaders come from the family of existing or prospective youth members. Fact. Targeting family members is the most effective place to focus your recruitment plan.

We have referred to 'adults' rather than parents, because this covers the range of adult roles that can be present in a young person's life.

Who?

A successful recruitment drive at a family camp starts with you, and how much you put into the planning phase.

Talk to all of the family members you can and invite them along. Most importantly, plan well and make it an amazing experience for everyone there.

How?

Involve adults before the event

Before the camp, gather the adults who've agreed to come and involve them in making some decisions for the camp - particularly decisions about what they'll be doing.

Think about the tasks that need to be done. This could be anything: cooking, photography, admin, driving etc. Adults are more likely to enjoy the experience and volunteer again if you give them tasks based on their skills and interests. Ask them what tasks they'd like to do – if anyone is not sure, give them something you think they'll enjoy.

All adults coming along will need to be DBS checked. This means that parents will need to have signed up in time for these checks to have been completed and returned.



Involve adults during the event

Start the camp in a way that involves your parent volunteers. If you're planning to do an opening ceremony or another Group tradition, make sure you teach it to the adults, so that they don't feel left out.

Give everyone a name badge at the start and make sure your adults all have neckers so they feel part of the team. Be careful how you talk – avoid jargon that new adults won't understand. Most importantly, your adults should be having a good time. You may find that an adult is not enjoying their tasks – be flexible and you'll keep people happy. If you have fun, stay positive and enjoy yourself others will too.

Towards the end of the event, talk to people about their experience, find out what they've really enjoyed and see if they want to come and experience more.

If an adult is unsure about being part of your team, have details of the [four week challenge](#) ready. Don't forget to say thank you to all adults for coming along.

After the event

Shortly after, say thank you to the adults who were on your team. This could be an email with photos attached or even just a text.

How does a family camp differ to a normal camp?

- You'll have a bigger team. Make the most of it.
- You need to let go. Don't do it all yourself. You're more likely to recruit adults if you give them a defined role that they're comfortable with.
- You'll have more time. With more adults actively involved, you'll have less to do. Spend that time with your parent volunteers.
- It's about recruitment – don't forget why you're doing the camp!

Top tips

- Keep recruitment in your mind from the early planning stages all the way through to the wrap up.
- Stay positive during all your interactions with adults.
- Give tasks to adults that reflect their interests and skills and allow them to take responsibility for these tasks.
- Make sure you introduce the adults to each other at the start of the event.
- During the event, be prepared to take a step back – there are more adults than at normal camps so you will likely have less to do at the event itself.
- Say a genuine thank you to adults and follow up any actions after the event (Don't leave adults hanging!)
- Be ready for a positive response and embrace small commitments and flexible volunteering.

Checklist for recruiting adults using family camps

Here are some things you may want to consider when planning and carrying out your event. They may not all be appropriate for the specific camp you're planning but they act as a guide.

Before the event

- Have ALL adults had a copy of the Young People First (yellow card) and Alcohol and Scouting (green card)?
- Does any adult who is staying overnight or has unsupervised access to children have a valid, Scouts DBS check?
- Are all adults involved covered by your insurance at an appropriate level?
- Make sure all adults know what equipment is needed – provide a kit list.
- Generate a list of tasks that are allocated to parents in advance – consider both hands-on tasks and tasks that are more 'behind the scenes'.

During the event

- Introduce and involve adults in opening ceremonies.
- Give out name badges to everyone - adults and young people.
- Be available to answer any questions.
- Don't use jargon, e.g. GSL, woggle.
- Schedule in an opportunity at the end to get new adults together to reflect on the successes of the weekend and explain volunteering opportunities.
- Come prepared with copies of your family rota for adults to sign up to.
- Create opportunities for the existing team to meet with adults who're interested in volunteering within that section.
- Say thank you to all of the adults at the end of the event.

After the event

- Follow up with an extra thank you to new adults – maybe an email with photos of the event.
- Follow up with every adult that offered to volunteer or showed an interest in volunteering.