

# Developing a Section Code of Conduct



**S**couts Canada is an organization that was founded and continues to operate on a set of fundamental principles and beliefs. We are guided by these principles and they help form our “Code of Conduct” for all members in Scouting. It is important to develop a Code of Conduct with your youth at the start of each Scouting year, as a “roadmap of behaviour” expected at meetings. Even the littlest Beaver Scout can understand how their actions or words can affect others.

One way to help youth understand how a Code of Conduct can be developed is to tie it into our Scout Law. Don't you think that if all of society followed the Scout Law, the world would be a better place? If every Scouting youth lives the Scout Law, we will be on our way to seeing that world develop.

## The Scout Law:

- A Scout is Helpful and Trustworthy
- A Scout is Kind and Cheerful
- A Scout is Considerate and Clean
- A Scout is Wise in the use of all resources

Ask the youth, “How could the concepts in the Scout Law be used to create a Code of Conduct?”

Focus on the words Helpful, Trustworthy, Kind, Cheerful, Considerate, Clean and Wise. Here are a few ideas:

**Helpful** – Being helpful could mean offering to help before being asked, or to assist someone else who is struggling to achieve a goal.

**Trustworthy** – When asked to do something, you can be trusted to do it to the best of your ability. You can be trusted to be honest in your relationships and actions.

**Kind & Cheerful** – Being kind and cheerful means not discriminating against or teasing others.

**Considerate** – Being considerate means looking at your actions and words through the eyes of those around you, and ensuring that no one feels marginalized, harassed or discriminated as a result. You also need to be sure that youth are considerate in *their* actions. Being considerate means privacy must be respected in all spaces.

**Clean** – Although being clean means respecting yourself and keeping yourself and your clothing clean; it can also reflect clean language and modeling correct behaviour.

**Wise in Resources** – Promoting recycling, practicing good environmental strategies, Leave No Trace – all these are ways to be wise in our resources. It also reflects on using other's abilities to their best advantage. If a youth holds a First Aid certificate, or is skilled at organizing, encourage them to contribute their skills to what is being planned, or to share their knowledge with others.

## Discipline

Occasionally, there may be a necessity for appropriate disciplinary action. Scouts Canada encourages positive reinforcement to correct inappropriate behavior. The following examples are **inappropriate** discipline methods:

- Physical blows or force
- Confinement
- Emotional/humiliation/name-calling
- Any other form of abuse

When setting the Code of Conduct don't forget to include appropriate discipline for those that don't follow it. By letting the youth decide the discipline, they will be more inclined to follow their Code of Conduct.

## Keep it Simple

A section Code of Conduct should be simple enough for all youth in the section to understand. It should have as few points as possible; over 10 items would probably be too many. If possible, try to incorporate the “two Leader rule” so that youth will know not to be alone with a single adult. By working with the youth to develop their own Code of Conduct, it will become “theirs” and they will be more likely to follow it.

Don't make developing a Code of Conduct boring – here are a few games/stories to introduce the material and keep youth active. For other ideas for Code of Conduct meetings, check out the section Code of Conduct JUMPSTART meetings and refer to the Program Calendars on our web site.



## Circle Counts

### (Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts)

Have the colony march to music in a circle. The leader calls out a small number at any time and stops the music. The Beaver Scouts have to form circles containing that many people. Play this a few times, then ask the Beaver Scouts how they felt when they were excluded from a circle, or had no-one to be with. Explain that in Beaver Scouts, we want to be friends with everyone, and not exclude others.

## The Blob

### (Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts)

This is a classic game where youth have to work together and cooperate in order to maneuver their “Blobs” successfully. Introduce the activity by saying that cooperation and working as a team is needed in the game.

Two players join hands to form the “Blob.” The Blob grows by chasing other players and touching them. Note: Only the free hands at the end of the Blob can be used to touch players. The Blob continues to grow until everyone is caught by the Blob!

## Story—Red Poison Darts

### (Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts)

*An interactive Story*

This story demonstrates in a visual way how put-downs and name calling are like “red poison.”

**Materials** - red marker or red chalk, chart paper or a black board with seven circles drawn on, with dots for eyes, using black marker or white chalk. Label the circles, in order, Roger, Maria, Natasha, Boy 1, Boy 2, Joey, leaders.

**Directions** - Start by discussing with the youth what put-downs and insults are, and how they can make people feel bad, hurt or like they are not worthwhile. Have them list some examples like name calling, making fun of appearances, etc. Explain you will be reading a story about put-downs and how they hurt others. As you read the following story, either a leader or an older child draws on a large piece of paper using the red marker to show how the red poison is spreading.

#### Red Poison Darts:

One day Roger was doing a knot-tying exercise at his meeting and he was having a lot of trouble tying a butterfly knot. *[Draw first circle].*

He was getting really frustrated and started to put himself down. “I’m so stupid”, he said to himself. “I never get anything right.” *[Colour in circle red.]* He was so mad at

himself it was as if he had filled up with red poison. Maria, who was sitting next to him, asked “Hey Roger, can I borrow some of your rope to practice with?”

Roger snapped, “Shut your big mouth!” at her, “I am trying to work.” It was as if Roger had shot a poison red dart at Maria. *[Draw a line from Roger to Maria.]* Maria felt hurt and felt like she had been filled up with red poison. *[Colour in circle.]* “You shut up!” she said. *[Draw a line back to Roger].*

Natasha came over at that time and asked Maria, “Can you help me set up for our next game?” Maria shot a red poison dart at Natasha. *[Draw a line from Maria to Natasha.]* “You are so stupid, you always need help setting up,” she said. “Do it yourself.” *[Colour in circle.]*

Natasha sat down. Two boys near her were talking. She gave them a dirty sneer and shot poison darts at them too. *[Draw a line from Natasha to the two boy circles.]* They filled up with red poison *[colour in circles]* and when Joey ran by them, they called him names and said unkind things about how he ran. *[Draw a line from the two boys to Joey.]* Joey filled up with poison too. *[Colour in circle.]*

Soon the whole section, even the leaders, was filled with red poison and shooting poison darts at each other over and over again. *[Draw more circles and colour them in.]* They had created a poisonous atmosphere.

After you have read the story ask your youth if they ever been in a poisonous atmosphere and how it felt to be there. Ask them how to prevent others and an atmosphere from becoming poisoned.

## Setting Respect Goals for Older Youth

### (Scouts, Venturer Scouts, Rover Scouts)

Have a discussion with your youth about what they think respect means. Help them to define the word “respect”. Then distribute a paper with the following sentences on it and ask them to fill in the blanks.

Setting your personal respect goals:

- I will respect myself by: \_\_\_\_\_
- I will respect other Scouts by: \_\_\_\_\_
- I will respect my leaders by: \_\_\_\_\_
- I will respect my Troop/Company by: \_\_\_\_\_

After they have filled out their goals, go around the group and ask each youth to talk about one of their goals and why they chose it as being important to themselves.

