

Scouts Victoria

Bring a Friend Program



The Bring a Friend program is a valuable opportunity to grow your Group's youth membership. The program capitalises on the power of word-of-mouth communication by encouraging current youth members to invite a friend along to their Unit meeting or Group open day/night. This simple step-by-step guide will walk you through the Bring a Friend Program, ensuring you have all the tools and information needed to implement it in your Scout Group.

How does Bring a Friend Work?

The Bring a Friend Program encourages current youth members to get involved in growing the Group by inviting their friends to see what Scouting is about.

Each youth member is given an [invitation](#) to hand out to friends or classmates at school. This invitation invites the young person to attend a Section meeting, open day/night or another Scouting activity with their friend to see first hand the activities they can participate in at Scouts. By attending the Scouting activity, it is hoped that the young person develops an interest in Scouting and a desire to join the Group.

The key to a successful Bring a Friend Program is to ensure:

1. Each youth member's school is notified about the Program and the invitations that will be handed out to students.
2. The invitations are appealing to young people and have sufficient information for parents.
3. The Section meeting, open day or activity is fun and engaging, and includes activities typical of the Scouting experience.
4. The friend/classmate is actively involved and is made to feel like a member of the Unit.

Why is it Valuable?

The Bring a Friend Program is valuable as it capitalises on word-of-mouth communications and existing social connections from current members to create a sense of familiarity and reliability for prospective members. The Bring a Friend program:

- Is a great opportunity to actively recruit new members, resulting in bigger Units.
- Gives youth members the opportunity to share their Scouting experiences with their friends and build up their confidence to talk about Scouts to others.
- Gives prospective members and their parents an opportunity to understand what happens in Scouts.

Bring a Friend Program: To-Do List

9 Weeks to Go: Conduct initial planning meeting

So you've decided to run a Bring a Friend Program for your Group – great! Now it's time to plan what tasks need to be completed to make sure it's a success. Conduct an initial planning meeting with all your Section Leaders to flesh out your ideas.

8 Weeks to Go: Get your youth members engaged and involved

Encourage your youth members to brainstorm fun activities to run at the Section meeting/open day.

The idea of the Section meeting/open day is for their friends to see what they get to do and what they love about Scouts, so it's important that the youth members have a say in what activities will motivate their friends to join. See Appendix 3 for a list of potential activities that can be run.

7 Weeks to Go: Finalise program of activities

Finalise the program of activities for the Section meeting/open day, and notify your youth members.

By doing this early on, the youth members will be able to confidently tell their friends exactly what is happening and what they can expect to do at the Section meeting/open day.

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6 Weeks to Go: Write to local schools

Submit a letter to your local school principal requesting their permission to allow youth members to distribute informational flyers and invitations to their classmates at school. This is an important step, as some schools have policies regarding the promotion of external activities. Writing a letter explaining the Bring a Friend Program will show your respect for school policies and authorities, and will offset any issues with distribution. See below for a Letter template.

5 Weeks to Go: Prepare roster

Draft up a roster of the adult and youth members responsible for different tasks in the lead up to and during the Section meeting/open day. This may include:

- Set up
- Manning the sign in desk
- Answering parents' questions
- Giving a tour of the hall and surrounds
- Serving food or beverages
- Running activities

4 Weeks to Go: Distribute invitations

Once you have received the local school's permission, distribute the informational flyers/invitations for youth members to hand out to their friends and classmates. While the invitation should be directed to the child/young person, it must also include relevant information for their parents including contact details and Child Protection details. Click [here](#) for a sample, printable invitation.

2 Weeks to Go: Collate resources and materials

Gather all necessary materials required for the Section meeting/open day, including promotional flyers, sign in sheets, directional signage, information sheets and resources for activities.

1 Week to Go: Finalise and distribute roster

Finalise and distribute the roster to key adult and youth members.

The Day Before: Set up

Set up the hall and surrounds, including signage and the sign in table.

On The Day

The day is finally here! With all your youth members involved in sending out invitations, you will hopefully have a big group of young people at the hall ready to learn about Scouting and its adventures! Here are a few final things to remember:

- Provide parents with abundant information about Scouts, its opportunities for their children, the local Scout Group, meeting days and times, the registration process etc.
- Be ready to answer different questions!
- Be confident and friendly!
- Make sure all young people are having fun and involved in activities.
- Give parents a copy of the brochure for more information.
- If a parent is ready to sign their child up for Scouts, fantastic! Direct them to the Scouts Victoria website to fill in a Prospective Youth Member Details (Y4). This can now be done online under Youth Form [here](#).
- Encourage questions – be sure to let everyone know that they can ask questions at any time.

Group Name
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gl.groupname@scoutsvictoria.com.au



[Group Name] Bring a Friend Program

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is [YOUR NAME] and I am the Group Leader at [GROUP NAME] Scout Group. I am writing to you regarding our Bring a Friend Program.

As you may be aware, Scouts gives children and young people an opportunity to learn and grow through adventure. We encourage the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of young people so that they take a constructive place in society as responsible citizens, and as members of their local, national and international communities.

[GROUP Name] Scout Group is conducting a Bring a Friend Program to support our Group's membership recruitment activities and to give more young people in our community the opportunity to experience the developmental benefits Scouting offers.

The Bring a Friend Program is an official activity of Scouts Victoria, and involves engaging current youth members to hand out informational flyers to their friends, encouraging their attendance at our Group's [SECTION MEETING/OPEN DAY] on [DATE].

A number of our youth members attend [SCHOOL NAME] – particularly in Years [GRADES OF YOUTH MEMBERS]. I write, therefore, to ask for your permission to allow our youth members to distribute the informational flyers to their classmates on school grounds.

Ideally the students receiving the information flyers will take them home to their parents who will then decide whether to attend the [SECTION MEETING/OPEN DAY].

If you have any questions or concerns in regard to our Bring a Friend Program, please feel free to contact me on [CONTACT number] or [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Many thanks in advance for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

[YOUR NAME]
[Position]
[Group]