



10 Tools for Increasing Group Communication

Communication is an important contributor to the experience that a youth and their family has with your group. The better the experience the more likely that family is to return. Retention is important to the growth and sustainability of your group.

Over communicating is always better than having someone feeling unclear of next steps, lacking information, or uninformed and therefore unprepared for an experience. We all communicate differently and it is therefore important to communicate in a variety of ways so that at some point the parent is receiving the information in their preferred format and style of communication.

Engaging one or two parents from the group to interact with the Group Committee and the Contact Scouters to oversee a group communication strategy is a great way to create shared responsibility between the Parents and Scouters.

1. Welcome letter

- Within 3 days of a new participant joining your group send them a Welcome Letter. This contains all of the information they need to feel prepared and excited for their first meeting, and sets expectations for the rest of the year

2. Private Facebook Group

- A closed Facebook group is a great place for parents, youth and scouters to share photos and day to day updates and information about upcoming meetings.
- Including a few screening questions to gain entry into the group is a great function available to the person setting up and managing the Facebook group. This provides you control over who is in the group and ensures that you have only current, active members seeing the content.

3. Group Newsletter

- A regular newsletter is a great way to share information from all sections with all sections. Seeing what the next section and senior sections are doing is one way to keep parents and youth interested in progressing through the program and returning next year.
- Have hard copies available at the meetings the week they are printed and also have them sent out by email to parents. Multiple ways of receiving it is the best way to ensure that it is read.

4. Emails

- Sending regular email to parents is a great way to iron out details for meetings and events.

5. Invitations

- Issue printed invitations to the families of youth or Scouters who are going to be invested. Mail them and help that investiture experience stand out as something special.



- Mail a first meeting invitation to new and returning youth. Receiving something in the mail is exciting and if it comes at the end of summer a few weeks before the first regular meeting of the year it will create anticipation and excitement for the program.
 - Issue invitations to existing youth to register for the following season. Include a list of planned activities for the summer and directions for registering online – include prices and contact information. Sending this to youth who have not registered over the summer is a way to help them feel connected to the program and to help the parent feel informed of the next step.
- 6. Sponsor, Scouter and Parent Helper Thank-You Notes**
- Create personalized thank you cards for your Sponsor and each Scouter and Parent Helper at the end of each season. Ensure that the card is specific to their contribution and creates excitement for the upcoming season.
 - Seasonal thank-you notes are a great way keep a sponsor connected to the group.
- 7. Birthday Cards**
- Have your Scouters sign birthday cards and distribute them to youth, scouters, and parent helpers who are celebrating a birthday over the course of the Scouting season.
- 8. Photo and Information Bulletin Board**
- Create a bulletin Board that can be left in your meeting space, or store it with your belongings and bring it out and put it on display each meeting. You can share current photos, newsletters, upcoming event information or reminders for parents. If it is visible in the area that pick up and drop off occurs it is likely to receive parent attention.
- 9. Feedback Surveys**
- As part of the Review process offer a brief survey to parents and youth after each event, outing, activity, season – whatever frequency works best for your group. Providing the opportunity for all voices to contribute to reviews ensures that learnings and best practices are identified and carried forward.
- 10. In person parent sessions**
- Once or twice per Scouting year host a parent meeting. Share program information, group information and offer the opportunity for them to provide feedback.