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# Character Development and the Core Values of Cub Scouting

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*Character is defined as the collection of core values integral to an individual that lead to moral commitment and action. Scouting views character development as "values in action."*

*Character development challenges Cub Scouts to experience core values in six general areas: God, World, Country, Community, Family, and Self.*

Since its origin, the Scouting program has been an educational experience concerned with values. In 1910, the first activities for Scouts were designed to build character, physical fitness, practical skills, and service. These elements were part of the original Cub Scout program and continue to be part of Cub Scouting today.

Character development extends into every aspect of Cub Scouting. Cub Scout Leaders strive to integrate Cub Scouting's **12 Core Values** in all facets of the program - service projects, ceremonies, games, skits, songs, crafts, and all the other activities conducted at Den and Pack meetings.

## The Twelve Core Values of Cub Scouting

**Citizenship:** Contributing service and showing responsibility to local, state, and national communities.

**Compassion:** Being **kind** and considerate, and showing concern for the well being of others.

**Cooperation:** Being **helpful** and working together with others toward a common goal

**Courage:** Being **brave** and doing what is right regardless of our fears, the difficulties, or the consequences.

**Faith:** Having inner strength and confidence based on our trust in God.

**Health and Fitness:** Being personally committed to keeping our minds and bodies clean and fit.

**Honesty:** Telling the truth and being **worthy of trust**.

**Perseverance:** Sticking with something and not giving up, even if it is difficult.

**Positive Attitude:** Being **cheerful** and setting our minds to look for and find the best in all situations.

**Resourcefulness:** Using human and other resources to their fullest.

**Respect:** Showing regard for the worth of something or someone.

**Responsibility:** Fulfilling our duty to God, country, other people, and ourselves.

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## 12 Core Values and The Scout Law

All Boy Scouts learn and strive to live by the ideals of the Scout Law:

*A Scout is*

Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent

The Core Values of Cub Scouting correspond to six of Points of the Scout Law:

### **Core Value**

Compassion  
Cooperation  
Courage  
Health and Fitness  
Honesty  
Positive Attitude

### **Scout Law**

Kind  
Helpful  
Brave  
Clean  
Trustworthy  
Cheerful

## Character Connections

The goals of the Cub Scout Leader are

- to seek out and maximize the many opportunities to incorporate character development
- to convince the young Cub Scout that character is important to the individual, to his family, community, country, world, and God



Character development should not be viewed as something done occasionally as part of a separate program, or as part of only one area of life. Character development is a part of everything a Cub Scout does. Character development lessons can be found in every aspect of the Cub Scouting experience.

When it comes to developing character, the complete person must be considered. Character development involves at least three critical areas:

1. *Know* (thought)
2. *Commit* (feeling)
3. *Practice* (behavior)

In Cub Scouting, addressing these three critical areas and relating them to values is referred to as Character Connections.

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Character Connections asks the Cub Scout to:

## ***Know***

Character development includes moral knowledge - both awareness and reasoning. For example, children must understand what honesty *means* and they must be able to use *reason* to evaluate and *interpret* each situation, and then decide how to apply the principles of honesty. What do I think or know about the Core Value? How does the context of this situation affect this Core Value? What are some historical, literary, or religious examples representing the Core Value?

## ***Commit***

Character development includes attention to moral motivation. Children must be committed to doing what they know is right. They must be able to understand the perspectives of others, to consider how others feel, and to develop an active moral conscience. They will be challenged to ask themselves "Why is this core value important? What makes living out this Core Value different? What will it take to live out this Core Value?"

## ***Practice***

Character development includes the development of moral habits through guided practice. Children need opportunities to practice the social and emotional skills necessary for doing what is right but difficult, and to experience the Core Values in their lives. How can I act according to this Core Value? How do I live out this Core Value? How can I practice this Core Value at school, at home, and with my friends? To make Character Connections an integral part of Cub Scouting, the 12 Core Values are integrated throughout the boys' handbooks and advancement program. Program support for character development can be found in Cub Scout Den & Pack Meeting Resource book, in the Cub Scout Leader Book, and at your monthly Roundtable meetings.

*Remember:*

- Core values are the basis of good character development.
- Character must be broadly defined to include thinking, feeling, and behavior.
- Core values should be promoted throughout all phases of the Scouting Program.

