



HOOSIER TRAILS COUNCIL  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

# Ideal Year of Scouting Planning / Unit Annual Program Planning

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**There are six keys to this planning philosophy and each one is critical to it's success:**



**Program Brainstorming**



**Program Idea Filtering**



**Calendar Construction**



**Annual Budget Planning**



**Budget Funding**



**Evaluation & Annual Review**

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## **Program Brainstorming**

**Scouting allows young people to follow their dreams, so their involvement in the planning of their annual program is vital. Allow them to express their ideas in a non-threatening brainstorming session. There are no bad ideas, some may seem wild at first, but where there's a will, there's a way. The more mature the Scouting unit, the more youth should be involved in this planning. Cub Scouts may just participate in the brainstorming portion, however, a Venture Crew may conduct the entire plan with only guidance from their advisors. To keep young people engaged in your programs, they must have buy-in.**

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## **Brainstorming Ideas To Get You Started**

The unit might plan and fund some of the following:

**Program Ideas**– Summer Camp, Day Camp, Monthly Activities, Pinewood Derby, Patrol/Den Activities, District/Council Events, Field Trips, Sea Base, Philmont, Canoe Trips, Ski Trips, Blue & Gold, National Jamboree, etc.

**Other Considerations** – Pay for Registrations, Boys Life Magazine, Meeting Supplies, Awards & Recognitions, Den/Patrol Expenses, Unit Administrative Expenses (newsletters, postage, copying, leader's guides), Trainings, Unit Equipment, Uniforming, Personal Camping Equipment, etc.

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## **Program Idea Filtering**

Once there are several ideas on the brainstorming chalkboard, it is time to begin to filter them and allow the most realistic ones to surface. Be cautious not to discount ideas for the youth, however, provide them with enough information that will allow them to decide what components are most realistic to fulfill their Ideal Year of Scouting.

In order to help in the filtering process, assigning dollar amounts to the ideas will help. The unit budget worksheet will help with this process.

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## **Calendar Construction**

**Building an annual plan involves putting key dates into a unit calendar that will be shared with members and parents. This calendar should be completed and made available at the beginning of the unit's program year. New Scouting families appreciate knowing what the year will consist of and providing a calendar is a great way to welcome them. When constructing the calendar, consider the following points:**

- **Council Calendar Events, Camping, Trainings, etc.**
- **Unit Fund-raising efforts, FOS Presentation, Recruiting efforts, etc.**
- **School Vacations, Functions, Holidays**

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## **Annual Budget Planning**

Now that you know what you want to do and when you are going to do it, let's figure out what it is going to cost. For troops and crews, it is very important to involve the youth in this process. Look for opportunities to have a lesson in finance management, or advancement. This is a chance to instill the value of a dollar in your youth.

The linked worksheet will help you calculate your unit's annual budget, click here for link: [Unit Budget Worksheets](#)

There are also planning resources available in the Scout Shop

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## **Budget Funding**

With a plan in hand, a decision must be made on how the newly constructed budget will be funded. Scouting is a great program to teach young people to be self-sufficient and not rely on their family to finance their activities. A well organized fund-raiser fills this need. Today's families are busier than ever and studies show that Scouting families appreciate a well thought out fund-raising approach. Show families the exciting programs you have planned, present them with a suggested fund-raising goal to pay for their participation and conduct a funding approach that will allow them to achieve their goal.

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## **Evaluation & Annual Review**

The final component of the plan is to evaluate the year and look for positive aspects and for things that could be done better. This annual review is a great opportunity to begin the planning process for the next year. By involving as many unit members as possible, you can build a plan that serves the most families.

As part of your unit's annual self-evaluation, it is a great idea to review the requirements for **Journey to Excellence**

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The magic behind this philosophy is simple, involve your unit in the construction of a program plan that excites them. Then communicate the plan to the families and the rest of the unit through a unit calendar of dates, events and budget of funded Scouting expenses. Then present an organized fundraiser and establish individual goals that will fund each Scout's Ideal Year of Scouting.

Following this planned approach to your unit's program year will lead to exciting adventures. Paying for the fun will be much easier with a short, well-organized fundraiser and participants will be more successful when they know what the money is going towards. The unit will spend more time Scouting and less time fundraising.

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**Desired Outcomes**



**Improved Unit Operations**



**Adventurous Programming**



**Increased Membership Retention**



**Youth Planning Skills Development**



**Increased Family/Unit Ownership**



**More Successful Fund-raisers**



**Making a Larger Impact On Our Members**



**Having Fun, Let the Adventure Begin!**

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**Most of us who have been sowing the seed will not, in the nature of things, be here to see the harvest; but we may well feel thankful, indeed jubilant, that our crop is already so well advanced...**

**- Lord Baden Powell**

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