
Chapter 6

THE COLONY & THE LODGES

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The Colony

When you organize the whole Colony into groups, you give Beavers the chance to play with their peers in small groups. When they share and work together at their level of maturity, Beavers have the freedom to grow at their own pace.

In Lodges

You can break the Colony into Lodges. Lodge activities can be divided into tasks that enable all Beavers to work at their ability level and feel that they are full contributing members. For example, if the activity is to create a large picture, some beavers can colour, others may cut the shapes for gluing and some do the gluing and build the picture.

The important thing to consider is providing activities at the ability level of each age. That way, Beavers learn that each person's achievement can contribute to the whole group (Lodge or Colony) or stand by itself.

Benefits of Lodges

Just as there are developmental benefits when children play with Beavers of similar age, there are other benefits when children play with Beavers who are younger or older. Scouting seeks to help develop the child as a whole. A balance between playing with peers and children of mixed-ages provides the most complete growing experience.

Due to their small size, Lodges offer Beavers a feeling of security. Lodges also allow Leaders to maintain control whilst having fun in the Colony. Your Lodge activities will provide Beavers with some extremely positive benefits.

Belonging and Purpose

Perhaps the most important function of Lodges is that they provide a feeling of belonging and purpose. The Lodge is a small group complete with name and older and younger friends. A healthy feeling of belonging and purpose can help Beavers develop empathy and a capacity to understand other Beavers' points of view.

Studies have shown that physical appearance (such as size and attractiveness) can influence peer acceptance. Studies have also shown that children as young as four years old can discriminate on the basis of race. Through Lodges, Beavers learn to see people's differences as something positive; they begin to understand that everyone brings special skills and abilities to the Lodge.

Activities that strengthen Lodge identity and promote social interaction and sharing help build a sense of belonging in Beavers.

Trust

When Beavers feel they belong to a Lodge and the overall Colony, it enhances their sense of trust. Trust is particularly important in developing friendships, listening to Leaders, and accepting new or changing experiences.

Beavers are more likely to approach new situations eagerly in an environment that gives them a sense of safety and security. You can build trust by encouraging Beavers to help one another, share and play together cooperatively in Lodge activities.

Initiative

Finally, when the Colony and Lodge provides a sense of belonging and trust, it gives Beavers the support base that enables them to risk striking out on their own. You see this when Beavers begin to talk more and share their ideas. Enhance the feeling by being an active and interested listener. It shows you consider each Beaver a unique and special person.

Cheer on Beaver attempts at trying new things. It helps them to cope with feelings of inadequacy that may come from fear and fumbling. Patting them on the back and praising them after a good try are great initiative builders. Activities provide opportunities to promote feelings of belonging, trust and initiative.

Activity Ideas For Lodges

Here are some activity ideas for Lodges. Adapt them to suit your own needs and ideas.

How do you decide when to run activities by Lodges?
These guidelines may help.

There are times in your programme where an activity is best carried out in a larger group setting or sometimes, a smaller setting such as Lodges. Consider how the activity may work by experiencing it as a large group or a Lodge.

When working with a larger group:

- It may be easier to plan or require fewer materials for an activity,
- Everyone will get the same experience such as a story,
- Beavers benefit from a sense of belonging and purpose,
- Beavers get to interact with the whole Colony at once as well as the Colony Leadership.

In smaller groups:

- Beavers are more likely to participate,
- Beavers are more likely to make friends rapidly

- Good opportunities are provided for Leaders to get to know the Beaver Scouts, and activities such as crafts may be more successful due to closer supervision.
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Activities with a cooperative and exploring/discovery spirit (for example: non-competitive games, nature hikes, familiar songs) are terrific for Lodges.

Guidelines For Linking Beavers to the Cub Programme

Linking the Colony with the Pack is a critical aspect of encouraging Beavers to move-on to the Cub Section. For Beavers, a sudden change to a Pack environment can create a high level of anxiety in a seven-year-old child who has grown accustomed to Colony routines.

To encourage a successful transition from Beavers to Cubs, Beavers should have a gradual and rewarding exposure to Pack activities such as visiting the Pack during a Group Camp or having Akela visit during the Colony Meeting.

The actual moving-on period starts when the Beaver is 7 years old and lasts for a full 3 months. This will help ensure a smooth transition from one section to another. Can be extended to but not more than 6 months depending on the Case.

Here are some linking concepts to consider:

Linking: Colony Leaders and Pack Leaders

Close cooperation between the two Section Leaders is essential for creating a positive experience for all the children involved. Compare and schedule programme plans to accommodate both sections. Have both sections meet a number of times over the course of the year to build their comfort level and familiarity between both Sections.

Blending the security and familiarity of Beavers with the excitement and challenge of Cubs is a positive step in meeting the Moving-On Beavers (MOBs) changing personal developmental needs. How often they go to the Pack will depend on the children involved, and the programmes offered in both the Colony and Pack at certain times of the year. Keep parents informed as much as possible about programme changes.

In the beginning of the Scouting year, Colony and Pack Leaders should meet to discuss the Moving-On Process for the MOBs of that particular year. This will help both Sections with the planning of the yearly programme and planning for recruitment sessions.

General Guidelines for Beaver Leaders

Once all necessary arrangements are made with the Cub Leaders, spend time meeting with your MOBs to introduce them to the idea of visiting the Pack for special activities. Parents could be asked to attend as well. More often than not they too will want to know what

will be the way forward. Invite a Cub Leader to visit the Colony and talk with your Beavers about what the Pack does and the various activities the children will be involved in over the course of the year.

When it is time to begin visiting Pack meetings, a Colony Leader should accompany the Beaver/s.

What would the Beaver Leader's role be?

The Scouter will provide a friendly adult face to the MOBs and help Pack Leaders with the extra children. Colony Leaders can rotate this role.

MOBs have the opportunity to participate in a Pack programme that leads them to successfully completing the Tenderpaw Badge upon completion of the Link Badge. It is important to note that Cub badges ***are not to be worked on during Beaver meetings and vice versa***. By following these guidelines, it preserves the non-competitive emphasis of the Colony. Your MOBs will receive the extra programme challenge often desired at this age, while creating gradual familiarity and anticipation to moving on to Cubs.

General Guidelines for Cub Scout Leaders

Make arrangements for a Cub Leader to visit the MOBs at a Beaver meeting. Talk to the children about what Cub Scouting is about, what kind of activities the Pack carries out, and generally dispel any fears and answer questions they may have.

Review the Pack's schedule of activities that your MOBs can attend. Be advised that until the Moving On period is completed, Beaver Scouts may attend all activities that are common between the Beavers and Cubs programme for example: hikes, etc. However, they are still not allowed to go on camps, sleepovers or attend swimming activities. Only after the Moving-On ceremony is completed they may participate in such activities. It is imperative that both Parents/Guardians and Leaders of both sections are informed of this provision.

Ensure that Parents/Guardians have all the necessary information on the Pack: meeting times, monthly programmes, equipment/supplies needed, expected behaviour, etc etc.

Before the MOBs visit the Pack, spend some time with the Cubs talking about having Beavers coming to the meetings. Discuss the importance of making them feel welcome, and how the Cubs can look out for the Beavers. Creating a caring big brother or sister attitude in the Cubs will foster a warm and friendly meeting atmosphere. Twinning them (Buddy System) with an older Cub may also help make your Beavers feel secure.

When the MOBs first arrive at the Pack meeting, greet them with a special Grand Howl. After teaching the Beavers about the Grand Howl and how it is performed, let them take part in performing this ceremony. In order to make MOBs, and other new Cub members feel accepted and part of the group, include all children in Pack ceremonies. With brief instruction, any child may participate in the Grand Howl, which serves to create a

sense of belonging in the child and team spirit in the pack. Try to include the MOB's in a variety of Pack programmes throughout the linking period, such as outings, a day at pack camp and other events beyond meetings.

At the Moving-On Ceremony Beavers pass under the Colony and Pack flags and stop underneath them. They are met by their Sixer and presented with their Six's woggle (which is worn at once). A Grand Howl will follow bringing the Moving-On Ceremony to an end.

More detailed information on this topic of Ceremonies can be found in Chapter 10 of this Beaver Scout Leaders' Manual.