

TROOP SERVICE PROJECT EXPECTATIONS

BE REAL AND SIGNIFICANT

Young people investing time and energy in volunteer work for others want to know that they are doing something significant. When the project is done, they should be able to look back with satisfaction upon an effort that has made a difference. Busywork projects designed to keep boys occupied rather than to accomplish real goals waste their enthusiasm and provide little value to others.

BE DEMOCRATIC

Scouts are far more likely to throw themselves into a service effort if they have taken part in selecting, planning, and organizing it. Service work is also a tremendous opportunity for a troop's boy leaders to gain hands-on leadership experience. As with most other troop activities, adult leaders may offer direction and coaching but as much as possible, should allow the Scouts themselves to put together and complete service projects.

BE CLEARLY DEFINED

A project should have definite beginning and ending points, with logical steps in between. The purpose of the service effort should be understandable to Scouts who are taking part, and they should have access to the full scope of the work even if their role is to complete just one part of it. A clear goal allows Scouts to measure their progress along the way, increasing their sense of participation and their pride in a job well done.

BE WELL PREPARED

Being prepared for a project often begins long before the day of the effort. With the guidance of their Scoutmaster and other adults, boy leaders can lay the groundwork so that everything is ready when troop members arrive to carry out the work. One question to answer (there are others) before beginning any service project is: What is the purpose of this project? Consider both what the beneficiary might gain and what the Scouts might learn.

INCLUDE RECOGNITION AND REFLECTION

Reflection is a learning process of careful listening and sharing that allows Scouts and leaders to assess an experience and get from it the greatest value it has to offer. It can be an effective technique in many teaching situations.

Recognition does not always involve badges and awards. The most important recognition Scouts receive is internal - the confidence built upon having mastered new skills and the self-esteem gained by taking part in worthwhile acts of service.