

How to plan a better Webelos transition crossover ceremony



Found the perfect Scouts BSA troop? The next element of a smooth transition is a meaningful crossover ceremony.

Ceremonies leave lasting impressions on boys and girls and teach important principles to those involved and those watching. The BSA says the Webelos Scout's graduation ceremony should clearly signify his or her transition to a new level of Scouting. While ceremonies are as unique and varied as Cub Scouts themselves, here are a few tips for planning an unforgettable one.

Take It Literally

Make sure the ceremony visually represents the progression from Cub Scouting to Scouts BSA.

Many packs use a physical bridge — indoor or outdoor — to symbolize the crossover. Simple bridges can be built, dismantled and stored for later reuse. Outdoor bridges at parks or nature centers provide free crossover locations in a natural setting. (Search "Scouting crossover bridges" online to find tons of ideas and options.)

Include Both Sides

Even without a bridge, Cub Scouting and Scouts BSA should clearly be represented during the event, with leaders and Scouts present from the Scouts' pack and their future troop (or troops).

"We did our crossover at the fire ring of the local Scout camp," remembers Texas Cub Scouter Cathy Burks. "Scoutmasters and Scouts came from each chosen troop and gave a neckerchief and slide to the Scouts joining their unit. It was awesome."

Webelos Den Leader Alice Herrick of Pack 171 in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., organizes a dinner with formal written invitations. "The Scouts present their mom with a pin and read a letter of thanks to each of their former den leaders before they cross the bridge to their new troop."

Many Pieces of Flair

Finally, don't forget the pizzazz — this is Cub Scouting, after all. Your pack's crossover ceremony should include a theme, symbolic gifts or even special lighting.

Marc Dworkin, former Cubmaster of Pack 252 in Allendale, N.J., gave each of the graduating Webelos Scouts an (imitation) eagle feather as they crossed the bridge.

Dworkin told the Scouts, "This feather is not really a gift. I want you to return it to me at your Eagle Scout court of honor."

When ceremonies are meaningful — and Scouts feel welcomed — Webelos Scouts and parents understand the significance of their advancement and naturally want to continue on the Scouting trail.

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