

Why Parents Should Become Scouts Canada Volunteers

BY GWEN GORE

This is a testimonial; what I call my “Old Scouter” speech as I use this when I speak to parent groups.

“I have held each position in group committee, been a Scouter for several years and presently volunteer with the area service team. My children are now adults in their twenties. I miss them badly but have wonderful memories of our Scouting times together. Not one minute in Scouting was wasted time.”

1. This brings me to the first and most important reason for a parent to be part of Scouting. This time in your children’s lives will be over in the blink of an eye. Before you can take a deep breath you will be wondering where they are and what they are doing because they are so independent they no longer need you. Spend every minute you can being a part of their lives now because this window of opportunity will be quickly closed. At no other time will you be able to influence your children’s ability to set standards and make choices than right now. There is NOTHING else that you are doing right now that is more important.

2. Scouts Canada honours deserving youth with two awards: the Chief Scout’s Award and the Queen’s Venturer Award. In BC, the Department of Education



Join in the fun – with Scouting.

deems these awards so significant that they allow two credits for each award towards a youth’s high school diploma. Employers look twice at a résumé with these qualifications. Scholarships can be determined by these awards. It has been observed that a youth is far more likely to complete the requirements for these awards if a parent is involved in the group. This can be translated as, “The more YOU put into the program, the more YOUR CHILD gets out of it’.

3. There is no other organization where a volunteer has more influence in the content of the program

than Scouting. Every volunteer brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and passion to the job. Volunteers have the opportunity to share their

favourite sport, hobby, and expertise and infect a whole new generation with their enthusiasm. I once worked with a Scouter who was an avid orienteer. Because of his enthusiastic coaching, a team of our Scouts competed in the BC Summer Games.

4. Adventure is a huge part of Scouting. As a Scout leader, I have climbed rock faces, crawled through natural caves and rafted raging rivers. I have kayaked remote islands and hiked in the land of grizzlies. I have attended jamborees and an international conference. I have slept in tents, tarps, snow caves,

cabin lofts and under the open sky. And I did it all starting in my forties. Imagine what more adventures I could have experienced if I had just started sooner?!

5. Scouting is a mecca of hard working, dedicated, caring people – the kind of people anyone would have the pleasure of calling friend. Through training seminars, working in my own group, attending jamborees, and meeting parents and leaders of other groups, I have made the acquaintance of some of the most interesting and stimulating individuals anywhere. I believe the modern term is ‘Networking’ but it does not come close to describing how many of these people have enriched my life.

There are many other reasons to join Scouting. I joined because I wanted to be with my kids, and I stayed because I was having a really great time. My son once said I had run out of my own kids so I had to borrow other people’s.

If I were to design a Scouts Canada poster, it would be a picture of Scout leaders having fun and the caption: “Oh . . . and your kids can join too!” X
– Gwen Gore is the deputy commissioner group services for Pacific Spirit Area, BC. She invites leaders to tear this page out, modify it and use it for their next parent talks. It works!