



Welcome to the Webelos/Arrow of Light Program



(Webelos stands for "WE'll BE LOyal Scouts")

The Webelos/Arrow of Light (AOL) Program is a two year program for Fourth and Fifth Grade Boys. Fourth Grade Boys work toward the Webelos Badge, while Fifth Graders work toward the Arrow of Light badge. Being the oldest Scouts in the pack they carry the responsibility of being good role models to the younger Cub Scouts. It falls upon the Webelos/AOL to help explain what exciting activities await the younger Cubs and to help the Cubs during pack activities.

Webelos/AOL take more responsibility for the running of their den. And they do more things as a den. The emphasis shifts from home-centered activities to group-centered activities similar to those they will encounter in Boy Scouting. There should be a gradual change from being an 'adult-run' den to being a 'boy-run' patrol ready to fit right into an adventurous Scouting troop. This migration requires the parents and den leaders to give the Scouts more and more control, decision-making power, and responsibility as they progress in skills, abilities, and maturity. Parents and den leaders play a new, more supportive, and less directive role with Webelos.

The major goal of Webelos/AOL is to give the Scouts a taste of what it is like to be a Boy Scout and to get them used to how Boy Scouting is structured. They learn that it is their responsibility to earn their adventures.

It is in Webelos/AOL that the world of outdoor Scouting begins to open up. With their parents, the Scouts are able to camp and go on other outdoor activities with their den or local Boy Scout troop. They also may participate in Boy Scout Troop meetings and some other Scouting events.

In short, Webelos/AOL is the transitional program between Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting. The Scouts are still under the direction of the Cubmaster, but hold their own activities and do many things too advanced for younger boys.

At the end of the program, the Scouts truly have a taste for what Boy Scouting is all about and have a head start in proceeding through the Boy Scout program.

The Webelos/AOL Den

Though modeled after Boy Scout patrols, Webelos/AOL are still placed in dens. The boys may, however, obtain patrol insignia patches from the Scout Shop that replaces the den number on the uniform. Den names are sacred to the boys, so let them choose it themselves; this will also help teach them the democratic skills they will need when they get into Boy Scouts. The name should be 'theirs' and it is encouraged to allow the boys to be creative. For example, they don't need to be the 'Eagles', they can be the 'Soaring Eagles.' Dens also have a den yell and a den flag. The den flag should be brought to each den meeting, pack meeting, and other relevant den activity. Den flags should be created by the boys, not the parents; no matter how "good" the final product may look.



The role of the Webelos/AOL den in pack meetings differs from that of the younger Cub Scouts. The Webelos/AOL den may present an exhibit or projects or demonstration of skills they've learned in exploring their activities for the month.

The Webelos/AOL are old enough to handle certain responsibilities at pack meetings. They may be asked to set up chairs, usher people to their seats, and direct them to the den exhibits. The point is that the Webelos/AOL den should remain an integral part of the pack, and should have a part in each pack meeting.

Uniforms

Webelos/AOL may continue to wear either the blue Cub Scout uniform or transition to the Boy Scout uniform with blue shoulder loops. When switching to the Boy Scout uniform, do not transfer the rank badges (Tiger, Bobcat, Wolf, and Bear). The only badge that will go on the left shirt pocket will be the Webelos badge, once earned.



Note: It is up to the individual families to choose when they wish to change to khaki. Many families purchase the Boy Scout uniform when the blue one is either out grown or damaged.

The following uniform parts are worn with both uniforms:

- Neckerchief – Official Webelos neckerchief-triangular; blue, green, gold, and red plaid, with Webelos emblem.
- Neckerchief Slide – Official Webelos neckerchief slide-gold colored metal with Webelos emblem. Handmade slides may also be worn.
- Cap – Official Webelos baseball-style cap. Olive color with Webelos plaid front panel sporting oval Webelos emblem.

The Advancement Program

Just as with the previous ranks, Cub Scouts enjoy seven adventures as they earn the Webelos and Arrow of Light ranks. For Webelos, five are required and two are elective. For Arrow of Light, four are required and three are elective. There are a total of 18 electives available that are shared for these two ranks.

Tiger, Bear and Wolf Scouts earned belt loops for each of their adventures.

Webelos/AOL earn pins which can be displayed on the Webelos Colors device. The colors are worn on the right sleeve, just below, and touching, the American flag. This moves the advancement program closer to the Boy Scout merit badge system where recognition items are displayed on a sash

Like the belt loops a pin is awarded for each completed adventure. The boys are free to work on required and elective adventure pins at the same time. Adventure pins should be presented as soon as possible. When the requirements for the Webelos or Arrow of Light ranks are fulfilled, the rank badge is presented at the next pack meeting.

Advancement Sign Off - each Scout is supposed to take his handbook to the den leader or assistant den leader for sign off when a requirement is completed. This is a



change from having a parent sign off every activity. This change prepares the Scout to have a Scoutmaster sign off each advancement requirement in Boy Scouts. There is more responsibility put on the Scout to remember and bring his handbook to meetings and get it signed.

Note: Help the Scouts along until they get the routine. Have them bring their handbook to every meeting and reward them for bringing them until they get it. Have a list of adventure requirements that you plan on completing at a meeting so you, your assistant, or a parent on your behalf can sign off those that are completed right away. This will help the Scouts understand the importance of the handbook.

• **Webelos Badge**

The Webelos badge is the fourth rank in Cub Scouting. You can start working on it as soon as you join a Webelos den. To earn the Webelos badge, you must:

1. Be an active member of your Webelos den for three months. (Being active means having good attendance, paying your den dues, and working on den projects.)
2. Complete each of the following Webelos required adventures with your den or family:
 - a. Cast Iron Chef
 - b. Duty to God and You
 - c. First Responder
 - d. Stronger, Faster, Higher
 - e. Webelos Walkabout
3. Complete two Webelos elective adventures of your den or family's choosing from this list: Adventures in Science, Aquanaut, Art Explosion, Aware and Care, Build It, Build My Own Hero, Castaway, Earth Rocks!, Engineer, Fix It, Game Design, Into the Wild, Into the Woods, Looking Back, Looking Forward, Maestro!, Moviemaking, Project Family, Sportsman
4. With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide and...
earn the Cyber Chip award for your age.*



* If your family does not have Internet access at home AND you do not have ready Internet access at school or another public place or via a mobile device, the Cyber Chip portion of this requirement may be waived by your parent or guardian.

The Webelos badge, unlike the previous ranks in Cub Scouting is oval in shape. It is the same size, shape, and design as the rank badges worn in Boy Scouts. When it is earned it is placed in the center of the uniform shirt's left pocket. If the Webelos is still wearing the blue Cub Scout uniform then all other rank badges and arrow points should be removed.

• **Arrow of Light**

The Arrow of Light Award is the highest rank in Cub Scouting and is the only Cub Scout badge that can be worn on the Boy Scout uniform. As a boy works on the Arrow of Light, he gets a chance to practice some scout skills that he has already learned, earn more adventure pins, and really



learn what a Boy Scout is. Because this award is so special, a special ceremony is usually performed by the pack.

The Arrow of Light displays an American Indian sign for the sun and, below it, an arrow. The seven rays of the sun stand for each day of the week. They remind the Scout to do his best every day as he follows the arrow that leads to Boy Scouting.

A boy that is new to Scouting in 5th grade does not need to earn any previous ranks. He can earn the Bobcat badge and then the Arrow of Light along with his den, even if he does not have the Webelos badge yet. If it's important to him, he can put in more effort and fulfill the Webelos requirements during 5th grade also, without missing out on the adventures his den is doing for Arrow of Light.

The requirements for the Arrow of Light are:

1. Be an active member of your Webelos den for six months. (Being active means having good attendance, paying your den dues, and working on den projects.)
2. Complete each of the following Webelos required adventures with your den or family:
 - a. Building a Better World
 - b. Camper
 - c. Duty to God in Action
 - d. Scouting Adventure
3. Complete three Webelos elective adventures of your den or family's choosing from this list: Adventures in Science, Aquanaut, Art Explosion, Aware and Care, Build It, Build My Own Hero, Castaway, Earth Rocks!, Engineer, Fix It, Game Design, Into the Wild, Into the Woods, Looking Back, Looking Forward, Maestro!, Moviemaking, Project Family, Sportsman

Note: The electives done for the Webelos badge cannot be used for earning the AOL.

4. With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide and...

earn the Cyber Chip award for your age.*

* If your family does not have Internet access at home AND you do not have ready Internet access at school or another public place or via a mobile device, the Cyber Chip portion of this requirement may be waived by your parent or guardian.

Note: Unlike the electives, earning the Cyber award as a Webelos does count for the AOL requirement.

Camping

It is in Webelos/AOL that the world of outdoor Scouting begins to open up. The Scouts are able to camp and go on other outdoor activities. Most of these activities are not with the pack, but with their den, other Webelos/AOL dens and with Boy Scout troops. At the end of the program, the Scouts should have a taste for what Boy Scouting is all about and have a head start in proceeding through the Boy Scout program.



As a Webelos some simple parent-and-son overnight campouts should be planned, with emphasis on learning the basic skills of outdoor living and having fun outdoors. The guidelines in the Cub Scout Leader Book, NO. 3220A, should be followed closely to ensure that the camping experience is comfortable and fulfilling. The Webelos den and parents should cook meals as a group, not as parent/son meals.

During the Arrow of Light year, camping skills can be expanded, although they should not exceed those taught at the entry level of Boy Scouting. The concept of participation together by the boy and his parent (or responsible adult partner) must be maintained. Use improved camping BSA facilities accessible to transportation, rather than wilderness sites. Fire-building, basic cooking, camp sanitation, tent-pitching, making a comfortable ground bed, nature study, and conservation are skills that could be included in camp programs. Also cover the division of jobs (cook, fireman, KP) using a duty roster that rotates for each campout and even at each meal. Start allowing the AOL Patrol (without parents) to cook some meals together as a group. Let the parents eat separately.

There are three things to understand about Webelos/Arrow of Light overnight experiences:

- They are parent and son events. BSA policy states that camping is a **one-on-one** activity with a responsible adult partner present for **each** scout. Responsible adult partners must be at least 21 years of age.
- It is not a Scout pioneering adventure. The campsite should be located well isolated from the rest of Scout camp or on private property that is easily accessible by car. More than likely, family type camping equipment will be used which, often, is heavy and difficult to carry any distance.
- It requires protection from the weather and also materials necessary for the preparation of food and program items to suit the area where the overnight is being held. Tents will be required for protection.

Parent and son experiences may be carried on with troops assisting and participating. However, District and/or Council camping, as it is conducted for Boy Scouts, is not permitted for Webelos/AOL dens (Note: The District's Webelos-o-ree is an event conducted for Webelos, with Boy Scouts as staff so it does not fall in this exclusion). What does District or Council camping for Scouts mean? It is the pioneering type of camping that Scouts do when they backpack into a campsite without modern conveniences, cook their own meals and are totally self-reliant. Few Webelos/AOL Scouts have the maturity or experience for this type of camping. Even fewer Den Leaders are ready to cope with 7 or 8 young and inexperienced campers.

Notes: There are certain activities specified for each phase of Scouting. Cubs do certain things in the outdoors, but not others. The same is true of activities Webelos/AOL will and will not do. It isn't that they can't do them, it's just that within the total program Scouting for boys, which is designed to be part of their experience for several years, there must always be something ahead for them to look forward to. Avoid exhausting your Scouts by pushing too much too fast and too soon.

In order to camp the adult leader is required to have Youth Protection training and should also take Outdoor Leader Skills for Webelos Leaders (OLSWL) training (though this is not yet required). BALOO (Basic Adult Level Outdoor Orientation) training is not required since this is the training for Cub Scout family camping.

Transition to Boy Scouts

A Boy can join a Boy Scout troop when he meets one of the following criteria:

- Is 11 years old,
- Has completed the fifth grade (Scouts use June 1 as their official graduation date), or
- Has earned the Arrow of light and is at least 10 years old.

Early in the AOL year (if it has not been done previously), a close relationship should be established with the Boy Scout troop that the Scout plans to join. This will help the Scout to become familiar with the troop and its members and learn about the exciting activities that await them in Boy Scouting.

Notes: Paperwork to join a troop may not actually be processed until boys receive the Arrow of Light Award and are ready to become a member of the troop, but this final step encourages him to continue in Scouting and enjoy the excitement, adventure, and benefits of the program.

Plan to visit a Boy Scout-oriented outdoor activity either in the late spring of fourth grade or **early** fall in fifth grade. If you wait until the last month or two before February in fifth grade to try to visit you may find your options severely limited (and extremely cold).
