Welcome to this presentation entitled

“What Really is Scouting?” It is intended for an audience of leaders overseeing the Scouting program

in faith-based and other Scouting organizations, and is based primarily on research findings from the Tufts CAMP Study.

The slides and accompanying narration were assembled by Ben Call from the Grand Teton Council in consultation with Daniel Warren, currently Team Lead of Research and Evaluation for the BSA, and formerly a researcher on the Tufts study.

Dr. Warren has given his approval to the content of this presentation. Given that the subjects of the Tufts study were Cub Scouts, this presentation shall confine itself to the effects of Scouting on boys.

We will be discussing six key findings from the study. See if you can pick them out as we go along.
To begin, I would like to pose several questions.

First, how do you and those around you see Scouting?

I am sure that there are many answers to that question. Nevertheless, I suspect that most of us view Scouting primarily as an activity program for youth. And we might add, one that requires a measure of time, effort and financial support.

That being the case,

How well does it work? Is it a valuable tool for forging character in boys and young men? Or is it seen as ineffective and out-of-touch, supported only by a sense of duty?

Difficult questions arise such as, How well does Scouting prepare young men as future fathers and leaders? And Is Scouting really worth the major commitment it asks of parents, leaders and youth?

Yes, Scouting is an activity program for youth. And a very good one. But is there more to it than just that?
Is there value in the Scouting experience beyond the activities and awards?
To see the real value that Scouting brings, we need to look past WHAT we DO in Scouting, and look more closely at WHY we do Scouting.

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Does Scouting bring real value to the boys it serves?
Does it really have the power to make an impact that will carry forward into adulthood?
To get answers to these questions, and to see Scouting for what it REALLY is, let’s get an outside perspective.

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I would like to introduce you to an active field of research known as Youth Development.

There are groups of social scientists who have been evaluating youth development programs for decades. They have studied 4H, music, sports, and most other youth programs. They are interested in how these activities affect the lives of their participants. In particular they are looking for ways to encourage Positive Youth Development, or “PYD”.

The Field of Youth Development

• There are groups of social scientists doing ongoing research on programs for youth.
• They have studied nearly all major youth programs over the years, including Girl Scouts, sports and many others, to determine their effect on the lives of their participants.
• In particular they are looking for ways to encourage Positive Youth Development, or “PYD”.
“PYD” is the quality found in Youth Development programs that successfully promote positive outcomes.
Examples of promoting positive outcomes include
Fostering resilience, self determination, belief in the future, spirituality, and a clear and positive identity;
Promoting bonding, and social, emotional and moral competence;
And providing recognition for positive behavior, and opportunities for prosocial involvement.

These scientists are asking tough questions such as
- Are all youth programs equally effective in fostering Positive Youth Development?
- Are there common characteristics found in youth programs that succeed in creating PYD? And
- How well does Scouting accomplish the goals of PYD?

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To answer that question, Dr. Richard Lerner and his team of researchers at Tufts University near Boston launched a landmark study of character development in a group of Cub Scouts in Philadelphia. They called it the Tufts CAMP Study. Funding for the study was provided by the John Templeton Foundation. The BSA was involved in its planning only by making Cub units available for study.

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The purpose of the Tufts study was to see if Scouting really made a difference in creating positive character attributes in a group of Cub Scouts.

About 1,800 Cub Scouts aged 6-12 were compared with 400 carefully matched non-Scout boys from the Philadelphia area. Their characteristics were measured at the beginning of the study, and regularly over a 2½ year period of time. Character development was measured in 9 key areas:

- Hopefulness
- Helpfulness
- Obedience
- Thriftiness
- Trustworthiness
- Cheerfulness
- Kindness
- Hopeful future expectations
- Religious reverence

In the beginning, there were no significant differences between the two groups. By the end however, the differences were striking.
The findings of the study were powerful, and have gone a long way towards dispelling myths that have been held by many people about the Scouting program.

The first myth is that “Scouting is broken”. It just doesn’t make a difference.
The study looked at whether being a Cub Scout affected the development of character attributes over 2½ years.
  • It really did.
  • A number of changes were noted, both for better and for worse.

In a moment you will see some arrows.
  • The number of arrows you see represents the size of Scouting’s effect on the character attribute. One arrow is small, two arrows is medium, and three arrows is a larger effect. The direction of the arrows represents whether that characteristic increased or decreased or stayed the same.
    • For example
      <CLICK>

• Cheerfulness –
  • Scouts showed a small tendency toward greater Cheerfulness
    • That is, one arrow pointing up.
  • Non-scouts showed a moderate tendency toward less Cheerfulness
    • That is, two arrows pointing down.
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• Helpfulness
  • This shows a small increase in Helpfulness by Scouts and a small decrease by non-Scouts.
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• Obedience
• This shows a larger increase in Obedience by Scouts, and no change in non-Scouts. Likewise,
  <CLICK>
• Kindness
  <CLICK>
• Hopeful future expectations, and
  <CLICK>
• Trustworthiness

• Scouts made growth in every area
  • while non-Scouts stayed the same, or even lost some ground.
• These changes in character attributes might have appeared at the time to be relatively small--
  • But, like turning a ship’s rudder,
  • They are expected to have a major impact on the direction of these boy’s lives as they grow and mature.
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Scouts also showed other differences.

When asked to prioritize goals in their life, Scouts were more likely than non-Scouts to embrace Prosocial Values.

For example Scouts placed higher value on Doing the Right Thing, and Helping Others, while non-Scouts placed more value on Being Smart, Being the Best, and Playing Sports.
A most remarkable finding was the effect of Scouting on Religious Reverence. Religious Reverence is the quality identified by expressions from the Scouts such as 

“I pray”, and “I like to read or listen to stories from my religion”.


The study looked at the change over 2½ years in Religious Reverence in four groups.

1. Scouts from religious institutions (i.e. packs sponsored by churches)
2. Scouts from non-religious institutions (i.e. packs sponsored by community units such as the Rotary Club or the Elks Lodge)
3. Non-scouts from non-religious institutions (i.e. secular schools)
4. Non-scouts from religious institutions (i.e. Catholic and other church schools)

Let’s see what the results looked like.

1. Scouts from Religious Institutions showed no change in religious reverence
2. Scouts from Non-religious institutions
showed slight improvement in their Religious Reverence.

3. Non-scouts from non-religious institutions
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   showed a slight decrease in their Religious Reverence.

All of these changes were considered to be minimal.

4. However, in just 2 ½ years, Non-scouts from religious institutions showed a
   <CLICK>
   • major decline in their desire to pray and read stories from their religion.
   • This was a big deal.
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In the words of the researchers, “Non-scout boys from religious affiliated institutions reported a medium to large degree of decrease in their religious reverence.”

The potential impact of this on these boys’ future is large.

I am sure many of us have witnessed boys who drifted away from Scouting, only to later drift away from their faith and their Duty to God.

A question arises: Do these findings regarding Religious reverence apply to older boys as well?

The simple answer is that since similar studies have not been performed in older youth, we cannot say with certainty one way or the other. Nevertheless, given the strength of these findings in younger boys, it may well be that older boys are effected in a similar manner.
A second common myth about the Scouting program was also addressed by the findings of the Tufts study. This is the myth that

“Scouting doesn’t work”
so “I’ll just do it my own way.”

What about those Scouting leaders who feel the Scouting program doesn’t work for them, or who don’t really understand it very well, and who choose to modify the program on their own?

"Scouting doesn’t work", so “I’ll just do it my own way.”
In effect, they are creating a “Do It Yourself” version of Scouting. How well does this strategy work in terms of creating Positive Youth Development? We can’t say for sure, but we do know that the Scouting program as put forth by BSA does it very well. To understand Scouting and PYD better, let’s examine the elements necessary to have PYD.

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There has been considerable research on the elements of a successful Positive Youth Development program.  

First, all PYD programs are based on creating a space that is safe physically, socially and emotionally. In short, they ensure Youth Protection. There is no positive learning if youth do not feel safe.  

Second, You must start with the “The Big Three”.

Characteristics of Programs with PYD  
Findings from Youth Development Literature

1. Create a Safe Space

2. Start with “The Big Three”
The “Big Three” are three key elements found in all youth programs that succeed at PYD.

First. They provide youth with extensive opportunities for caring and supportive relationships with adults lasting at least a year.

Second. They promote the development of life-skills through a Life-Skill building Curriculum, and

Third. They provide opportunities for leadership in family, school, or community activities.

So how does Scouting measure up?

Number one.

Scouting recruits and trains adults for leadership positions extending over at least a year in a variety of settings.

Number two.

Scouting is filled with skills that directly apply to the life of a growing boy from cooking to personal finance. He also learns life-skills like grit and teamwork.

And number three.

As a Scout progresses in the program, he takes on greater responsibility for leadership. Until then, he learns through modeling by his youth leaders and his trained adult leaders.

All in all, Scouting fills the bill perfectly.
Much research has shown the importance of following a Structured Curriculum.
A Structured Curriculum is a system involving constraints, goals and rewards that define the participants’ activity. In other words, it is a carefully defined program or system of rules that guides participation toward a positive end. In the case of Scouting, this would be the full Scouting program as defined by the BSA.

The importance of following a properly Structured Curriculum was shown in a 2004 review of successful youth development programs where they found that 24 out of 25 successful PYD programs utilized a structured curriculum. Their Conclusions?

“96% of effective programs incorporate a structured curriculum”. And “Having a structured curriculum is critical”.

-In addition, they found that

The quality of program implementation was a major factor determining program effectiveness in achieving its goals.
-They identified three key characteristics of effective program
implementation.

Fidelity, Quality, and Consistency.
- Fidelity to the curriculum, which means following the Scouting program as closely as possible.
- In their words: “Fidelity of program implementation has repeatedly been shown to be related to effectiveness.”
- Quality refers to quality of execution, and
- Consistency refers to consistency over time.

Thus, essential elements in a successful PYD program include
Creating a Safe Place, and
The Big Three:
  - sustained adult-youth relationships,
  - strong curriculum, and
  - opportunities for youth leadership.
Also, the Curriculum is best implemented with attention to fidelity, quality and consistency.
We will now discuss three findings about the relation of program implementation to creating positive outcomes.

First, they demonstrated that having a high quality program really matters.

- High quality programs attract more boys, engage them more frequently, and hold onto them longer.
- All of this leads to more character development in more boys.

Units with a high quality program are better able to reach even boys who are less-engaged.
- They found that boys who are less-engaged are more likely to have character development if they participate in highly-engaged units.

In short, a high quality program leads to

More character development in more boys
In addition to having a high quality program, regular attendance also predicted character change.

In this portion of the study, the researchers looked at Scouts who regularly attended their Scout meetings, and compared them with Scouts who attended infrequently.

In effect, this is asking the question, does the “dose” of Scouting make a difference? Is it true, “The more Scouting, the better?”

The results:

Greater activity in Scouting predicted improvement in multiple areas. These included

Academic success. Boys who participate more in Scouting do better in school.

Connection to nature

Thriftiness
Intentional Self Regulation. This is the ability to make plans and carry them out.

In addition, earlier findings were reinforced, with more active Scouts showing greater

Helpfulness
Cheerfulness
Kindness
Trustworthiness
Hopeful future expectations

Their conclusion:
Greater intensity of involvement, and greater time in the program yielded greater positive change.

The greater the exposure to Scouting, the greater the benefit.
The last major point addresses the role of program leadership in achieving the goals of PYD. They stated that

“No dimension of activity involvement —intensity, duration or engagement— will be related to program goals when the structure and leadership that supports program curriculum is not readily in place.”

In other words,

We cannot be confident that any amount of activity by the boys will lead to character change when the structure and leadership are not in place to support the Scouting program.

Active leadership support of the Scouting curriculum is critical to creating a program that will change boys’ lives.

Without active leader support of the Scouting program, the program is more likely to fail the boys it is attempting to serve.
The researchers referred to the lack of leadership support under the label of “Poor implementation” or “Poorly developed program”.
-This is a quote from their research.

“In a poorly developed program,
where the links between
program curriculum (i.e. Scouting curriculum)
and goals (i.e. leadership direction)
are not well defined and validated,
even the most engaged participant
is unlikely to demonstrate positive change
as a result of his involvement.”

Note the consequence.
In a program where the leader’s priorities and goals are not aligned with the Scouting curriculum,
“even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change.”

The job of leadership is to actively generate support and energy,
not just for the idea of having a youth program,
but for the Scouting Curriculum itself.
Key Take-away Messages:

Strong linkage between leadership and the Scouting curriculum is essential to a successful program.

Without this, “even the most engaged participant is unlikely to demonstrate positive change”.

The program will likely fail the boy, and skeptical leaders will be “proven right” once again.

However, the reason the program failed is likely not that Scouting failed, but that it was poorly implemented.

It is perhaps failures such as this that have led some youth leaders to the conclusion that Scouting is ineffective.
So how did Scouting do?
Let’s look at the Final Scorecard.

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First we shall list the 12 points of the Scout Law to see how Scouting measures up against its own standard. And then list those areas which were tested in the study, and give them a checkmark if they improved with Scouting. Please note that some points in the Scout Law were not tested, and so are not listed.

In addition, a few other areas of improvement emerged, including

Access to resources,
Academic success,
Connection to Nature, and
Individual Self Regulation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Observed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>✓ Trustworthiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>✓ Hopeful Future Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>✓ Helpfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>✓ Academic Success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courteous</td>
<td>✓ Prosocial Values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>✓ Connection to nature</td>
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<td>Obedient</td>
<td>✓ Kindness</td>
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<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>✓ Obedience</td>
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<td>Thrifty</td>
<td>✓ Cheerfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>✓ Thriftiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>✓ Individual Self Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reverent</td>
<td>✓ Religious Reverence</td>
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In a nutshell, regarding character development, we learn that:

1. Activity in Scouting leads to the development of multiple positive character attributes.

2. Scouts are more likely to develop “Prosocial Values”.


Scouting changes boy’s character for the better in many ways.
Regarding program execution and leadership, we learned that

1. Units with a high quality program will reach more disengaged boys.

2. The greater a Scout’s attendance and engagement in the program, the greater his character development.

3. Scouting requires strong leadership support to become fully effective in changing boys’ lives.

Leadership support drives program quality, and program quality drives attendance. The foundation of character change is leadership support for the Scouting curriculum.
Some have asked if any studies have looked for evidence of residual effects of the Scouting experience of former Scouts who are now adults. In other words, is there any evidence that participation in Scouting impacts the Scout’s future life as an adult?

In 2010, researchers at Baylor University looked at this in a study entitled “Eagle Scouts—Merit Beyond the Badge.”

In a nationwide poll, adult men representative of the U.S. population were surveyed, with the key difference being that some had participated in Scouting, and some had not. The average age of those surveyed was 47 years.

The central question of the study was to determine if participation in Scouting, and ultimately becoming an Eagle Scout, was associated with prosocial behavior and positive youth development that carried over into young adulthood and beyond. In other words, do Eagle Scouts, because of the additional commitment and effort required to reach this rank, experience additional positive attributes that provide advantage and benefits to them over non-Scouts, as well as other Scouts who never attain the rank of Eagle?

2,512 individuals were surveyed, including 134 former Eagle Scouts, 853 former Scouts who did not receive the Eagle rank, and 1,502 men who were never a Scout.

Let’s see what they found. A number of questions were asked. We shall
look at the responses to four.

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The researchers examined the presence of prosocial behaviors in three groups: Eagle Scouts, former Scouts who did not receive the Eagle rank, and those who were never Scouts. For each behavior, they made two comparisons.

They compared the responses of Eagle Scouts with those who were never involved in Scouting, and they compared the responses of Eagle Scouts with those of Scouts who did not receive the Eagle rank.

Let’s first examine the comparison of the responses from Eagle Scouts to the responses from those who were non-Scouts, to four questions. (Please refer to the upper light-blue line.)

When asked if they had made and achieved a spiritual goal within the past year, Eagle Scouts were 81% more likely than non-Scouts to have done so.

Likewise, Eagle Scouts were 76% more likely to have held a leadership position in their local community, 80% more likely to have taken a course or class of interest to them in the past year, and 90% more likely to be currently certified in CPR than those in the non-Scout group.

Comparing Eagle Scouts with Scouts not earning the Eagle rank, please...
Compared to former Scouts who did not receive the Eagle rank, former Eagle Scouts were 81% more likely to have made and achieved a spiritual goal within the past year, 76% more likely to have held a leadership position in their local community, 30% more likely to have taken a course or class of interest to them in the past year, and 50% more likely to be currently certified in CPR.

Nearly all of these differences were present with a high degree of statistical significance.

In the words of the authors, “Analysis of the nationally representative survey revealed significant differences between Eagle Scouts and other Scouts as well as non-Scouts. Eagle Scouts consistently indicated their experiences in Scouting contributed to positive and prosocial development as measured by responses to a wide range of issues and subjects.” (end quote).

Their final conclusion:

“When compared to Scouts and non-Scouts, Eagle Scouts exhibit significantly higher levels of ... connection, service and leadership, ... goal orientation, planning and preparedness, and character.” (end quote)

The fact that these dramatic differences were demonstrated in men 30 years removed from their Scouting experience makes these highly significant findings all the more remarkable.

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Back to our initial question...

*How do you and those around you see Scouting?*

Some see Scouting as ineffective. Others may see it as out-of-touch, dying, or as having no greater value than other youth activities.

However, to those who really know, Scouting is a proven youth development program that consistently delivers on its promise to create positive change in boys.

So let’s return to our original question, “How do you and those around you see Scouting?”

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Some see Scouting as ineffective. Others may see it as out-of-touch, obsolete, dying, or as having no greater value than other youth activities.

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However, to those who really know, Scouting is a proven youth development program that consistently delivers on its promise to create positive change in boys.

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The Conclusion?  The evidence is clear:
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Scouting creates value that lasts by changing lives.

It fosters obedience, trustworthiness and religious reverence.
It promotes academic success, kindness and hope for the future.
It provides opportunities to learn prosocial values and intentional self regulation.
It creates positive outcomes.
It forges character and prepares boys for the future.
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The lasting value of Scouting comes
not from the great things that boys do in Scouting,
but from the great things that Scouting does to boys.

The value of Scouting is not that it entertains, or even that it teaches a valuable skill.
The lasting value of Scouting is that
<CLICK>
Scouting provides a solid foundation for boys to become men of character and honor.
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So What?
What should this mean to me and the boys I work with?
In other words,
   <CLICK>
What Really IS Scouting?

Scouting is more than just an outdoor activity program, silly songs and merit badges.

Scouting is a proven and effective program that changes boys’ lives, while sustaining Religious Reverence.

However, Scouting requires strong support from leadership to be fully effective.

It is that foundation of leader support that gives it the power to touch hearts and change lives.
Scouting, when properly implemented, is a powerful and effective program for creating change in the lives of boys.

I leave you with my conviction that activity in Scouting truly does make good boys into better men. Scouting DOES work. It DOES make a difference. It DOES change the lives of boys in deep and meaningful ways.

(pause)

Effective leadership, combined with a powerful curriculum, are ingredients that make Scouting powerful. The Scouting curriculum has been proven to change lives. Leadership support of the Scouting curriculum creates the foundation of Scouting success.

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The degree that our boys experience the power and effectiveness
that Scouting promises is therefore up to us—
their leaders.

(pause)

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In closing, I would invite you as leaders in Scouting to consider two questions...

One for you to ponder, and a question for you to discuss.

First question. Ask yourself

“What can I personally do to better support the Scouting program?”

Give yourself a moment to think about it, say a little prayer, and then write down your answer.

(pause)

Second. Together with the other leaders that oversee your program, sit down and discuss the question,

“What steps can we take to make our Scouting program touch the life of every boy?”

Brainstorm ideas, make a plan, and then carry it out.

As we focus on harnessing the power of Scouting to change lives, our programs will flourish, and our boys will someday thank us.

Thank you for your attention, and thank you for your support of Scouting as a powerful tool for shaping the lives of our youth.

For those who might be interested, participant handouts, presenter’s notes, and a PowerPoint version of this presentation are available for download at
www.tetonscouts.org. Also be watching for a video version of this presentation to be posted on YouTube.

Thank you.