Highlights:

We encourage our Scouts to interact with positive role models. We instill in our Scouts the Six Pillars of Character. We enhance the moral character in our Scouts instilled by parents

Although America is a culturally diverse society, we share common beliefs and values, such as democracy, equality, and fairness. Each generation bears the responsibility for sharing these same values and beliefs.

Positive Role Models

We are focused on the whole child as a part of their family and the greater community.



We support character playing a significant role as a part of our focus on the whole child. We are filled with hope and appreciate the

struggle parents and families face day in and day out. We have created an imaginative, adventurous vision which includes all on a nondiscriminatory basis for a brighter future.

Character is very personal and it starts with good role models for our Scouts early in life. Our Scouts already have family, friends, and others who inspire good character in our Scouts. There is a story about a family with financial challenges who were able to take their children to see a movie once a year. A real treat for them, they planned ahead which movie to see and everyone really looked forward to it. When they got to the box office, they could see that the price for kids 12 and under was lower than the adult price, but unfortunately their youngest child had turned 13 that year.

The youngest suggested, “I can just tell them I’m 12 years old.” Of course the parents were tempted – the few dollars may not seem like much to others, but it did mean something to them.

“That would not be right”, the mother said.

“But they wouldn’t know”, the child responded.

“We would know”, the father said.

Good character starts early. We do not pretend it is easy or simple. While few would find it so terrible for an underprivileged family to save a few needed dollars, it raises the

question, “What if everyone thought that way?”

When we look at the world today, is there any doubt that many, many people do think that way? We have a character crisis in the world right now. When we take a look at corporations such as Enron, we see the natural result of years of acceptance of lack of character in our society. “So what if I take a little something that does not belong to me?” is the seed that grows into a tree that bears the fruit of cynicism, inequality and even rage for people who find themselves on the losing end of a system that just accepts lack

of character as a part of everyday life.

We are not suggesting that those who need help struggle alone. That is one of the reasons we are inclusive and fully nondiscriminatory. If a Scout cannot afford traditional participation, we find a way to include them. The team sponsor seeks needed monies to ensure a financially challenged Scout can go to the movies or out to dinner with the rest of the team. We find ways to help those who need it while increasing good character rather than diminishing it. We all have the responsibility to promote good character.

The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA accept this responsibility. We enhance the moral and ethical character of our Scouts as instilled by their parents. We respect and value the rights of others, and youth acquire this same value by participation in our Scout Programs. In our society, athletes, celebrities, and high profile persons are sometimes improperly perceived as positive role models, and thus, their behavior is often imitated by youth. We help the youth who participate in our Scout Programs identify and emulate the attributes of individuals who truly are positive role

models. We encourage the participation of athletes, celebrities, and high profile persons who live their lives with character, and encourage their interaction with our Scouts.

Character Counts in our Scout Programs

Character counts in the life of our Scouts. The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA offer challenging programs that our Scouts choose, organize, and lead. Our Scouts are inspired to develop a compass, with which to

lead their life, by their choosing to live their life by our Scout Promise, Scout Code, Scout Spirit and by their Giving their Best in all they do. Our Scouts are also inspired by our Team Counselors who similarly undertake to live a life of character. We encourage self-respect and respect for others, in our Scouts and in the greater community, by creating an environment where character counts. We believe there can and should be a larger effort and value placed on good character throughout our country.

The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA believe in enhancing the positive character as instilled by the parents of each of our Scouts.

Our Scouts Choose Lives of Character

Our Scouts are encouraged to appreciate the value of good character and of having what they say count. We do not ask

our Scouts to promise or swear when committing to obligations, rather we consider the word of our Scouts their bond. We ask our Scouts to give their best in all that they do and consequently our Scouts appreciate we trust them and that their word is considered their bond. We encourage our Scouts to develop a moral compass to do what is right, rather than what is convenient.

Given the opportunity to interact with others, with supervision but not interference from adults, our Scouts make choices we can all be proud of. Because we trust our Scouts and treat them with the integrity and respect due all persons, they choose to make character count.

We enhance the worldview our Scouts have with regard to the value of good character, and contribute to the development of their moral compass. Adventure Scouts USA develops in our Scouts a way to live their life and lead their life. We believe in strengthening the values of family, character, caring,

purpose and service, and support efforts to improve the lives of all. The vision of a better world for all often times seems unattainable. Our vision strives to develop a society where opportunities are equal and earned, and individuals are measured by their talents, abilities, and the content of their

character.

The Importance of Character



In a world where cheating on tests and doing anything

to get ahead has become the norm, character is more important than ever. As a society, we need people who are willing to stand up and do what is right.

We are committed to the development of good character playing a larger part in society. We recognize people have

different views of how character plays a part in everyday life situations. In society, there is general agreement on what comprises fundamental ethical conduct; however, we believe good character can and should count more than it currently does. Creative solutions

and sincere effort must be made at every level of society to improve the role good character plays, and we commit to play our part.

Our measure of success will come many years from now when our Scouts are parents themselves. What sort

of world might be possible when character increasingly is a principle for living?

We do not subscribe nor believe in the current attitude of blame and divisiveness in our culture. We are more interested in profoundly making the effort to

resolve issues by working together with others. We consequently partner with parents and develop alliances with religious and governmental institutions and educational and community organizations. Our partnerships and alliances permit us to

work together toward achieving common goals and to advocate the idea that character does count.

CHARACTER COUNTS!

The Scout Programs of Adventure Scouts USA

are inclusive. But we stretch beyond our members to include other organizations, which also benefit youth. These “Friendship Organizations” are organizations we have a special relationship with. We encourage other organizations, which instill good character, to

join our “Circle of Friends.” One of those organizations is the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition. Adventure Scouts USA is proud to be the only Scout Program, national organization member, of the

CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition. CHARACTER COUNTS!, is a nonpartisan alliance of leading human-service and educational organizations working together to strengthen

the character of young people today and--safeguard tomorrow for all. We support the development of good character in our Scouts by using and reinforcing the six pillars of CHARACTER COUNTS!:

trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

The Six Pillars

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness

includes the positive character trait of honesty. Our Scouts are expected to tell the truth, to not repeat gossip or falsehoods, and do their individual best. We ask our Scouts after the end of a

project if they feel they really gave their best. If the answer is no, they are encouraged to concentrate on the trait of always giving their best by trying again.

Respect

Respect is a particularly important part of our Scout Programs because we are nondiscriminatory. Equal treatment and respect of all persons

is essential to the enhancement of character. It does not matter if our Scouts have physical disabilities, come from differing ethnicities, or have few outdoor skills. We foster the best in every Scout

without discrimination. Because our Scouts choose, organize, and lead their own activities, they develop an appreciation for each other's opinions. During

brainstorming, our Scouts come up with ideas for activities from which they choose one. No one is ever insulted or put down for their ideas. Every idea and every Scout is treated with respect.

Responsibility

We encourage the development of responsibility in our Scouts. We ask our Scouts to act with integrity, while keeping in mind the age of our Scouts

and their individual capabilities. As our Scouts grow up, we encourage them to take on increasing levels of responsibility, including the Team Leader position, in which they will be

responsible for facilitating meetings and coordinating activities.

Fairness

Fairness is also an essential component in character. In our

Scout Programs, we make sure every Scout is involved in every activity. No Scout will ever hear the words, “You cannot participate.” Every Scout participates in every activity while always

giving their best. We make special arrangements to make sure every Scout, including those with challenges, takes part in every activity.

Caring

We also encourage the trait of caring. Our Scouts care deeply about their family and friends and we encourage the inclusion of multiple generations and extended family members, and also

of friends who may not be Scouts. We also encourage kindness and decency toward all persons. Whether our Scouts are camping on a family-oriented camping trip, or

participating in an activity with their fellow Scouts, the development of caring relationships is important to our Scouts life and well-being.

Good Citizenship

We enhance good citizenship in several ways. Our Scouts participate in projects of service to the greater community. As Scouts progress, these projects build on each other and become more

involved. One of the activities our Scouts participate in is volunteering at the polls, an ideal activity for Scouts to appreciate the importance of voting by doing so. In another example, our

Scouts, with adult assistance, cook, prepare and deliver meals to shut-ins, particularly at holiday time.

Our Scouts Live Lives of Character

Our Scouts are always recognized, in part by their uniforms and activities, but also by the enthusiasm they exhibit. Additionally, others recognize our Scouts because their word is their bond

and because they act with conviction. We encourage our Scouts to pursue goals they wish to pursue, and we support them in their efforts. The interests our Scouts develop enable them to

acquire pride and pleasure in their efforts.

The road that lies ahead of us as a society is fraught with obstacles. It is how we overcome

those obstacles that demonstrate our character. Our Scouts realize that how they act when the path turns rocky is the measure of true character, and our Scouts choose

to stay the course.

Every aspect of our Programs encourages the concept that character counts. We believe character is evident

when our Scouts do the right thing in front of their friends, but equally important when no one is watching at all.

Character in the

Organizations We Work With

We consider character important in every part of our Scout Programs. We join organizations which

demonstrate good character consistently and particularly those organizations which encourage good character in youth.

From time to time we also need to work with vendors and companies to get supplies for our Scouts. We prefer to deal with companies which exhibit good

character. Paper and plastics companies which make recyclable products and green products are preferred. We also prefer to deal with companies which

have the fairest labor practices and are nondiscriminatory. We encourage our Team Counselors and Counselors to educate themselves on the

issues and to choose wisely when they purchase supplies for their teams.

We want our character and the character of those

we deal with to be as high as possible, but we understand it is possible to raise expectations so high, no one can meet them. It is not our intention to

do that. But we do believe character really does count, and we carry this philosophy into everything we do and everything we are from local teams to the

national level.