

(To be posted on website 02-06-17)

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

BSA Position Statement on Transgender Youth

The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law. Recognizing the established and well-known benefits of a single-gender program, the Cub Scout and Boy Scout programs are only available to boys.

Until recently, the BSA, along with schools, youth sports, and many other youth-serving organizations, ultimately deferred to the information on an individual's birth certificate to determine gender, and thus eligibility for Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting. In recent years the concept of gender identity has become much more complex than the binary choices of male and female and simply referring to a birth certificate. Communities and state laws are interpreting gender identity differently, and these laws vary widely from state to state.

As such, the Boy Scouts of America will accept and register youth in the Cub and Boy Scout programs based on the gender identity indicated on the application. Given that the welfare and best interests of each child is the top priority in Scouting, our organization's local councils will help find units that can provide for the best interest of the child.

When considering Scouting for a transgender youth, the youth's parents must have an initial discussion with the council and unit to determine:

- Is the child living culturally as a boy?
- Is the child recognized by his family as a boy?
- Is the child recognized by his school and/or community as a boy?

Living culturally as a boy generally includes dressing as a boy, using a culturally accepted male name or nickname, parents/caregivers using male pronouns when referring to the child, and being considered "a boy" in his daily-life. It is important that the Scouting community respectfully use the name and preferred pronouns (most likely male) when referring to the child. If the child is not living culturally as a boy, then the youth will not be eligible to register in these programs.

While discussing preferences directly with a transgender youth and the family is the best approach, helpful information is available to help ensure that we treat all Scouts with dignity and respect.

- Using Respectful Language (link on BSA web-site after 2/6/17)
- How Can Camps Support Transgender Youth – www.acacamps.org