One pack leader made this insightful observation , thank you.

"We stopped bring a friend nights. We run a program written by the cubs. They will always come to what they want to do, so let them write the program. Get them to cover 3 boomerang tests per term, a community service, a challenge and the rest is up to them. We also let them run it, with guidance. Youth led adult supported really works! Have a public Facebook page and share photos of the cubs doing stuff to your local community pages. Don’t advertise or recruit via Facebook posts, it turns people off. Just show them what the cubs are doing. We went from 9 cubs and struggling mid 2016 census to pushing 30 right now, and we get continuous enquiries from our Facebook posts. We've also had 8 grey wolves in that time. And it’s a flyspeck of a town too"

Ideas for Group Promotion & Advertising

Vary the way you advertise over the years as the public may start to ignore your promotions if always the same. However if you have interesting & adventurous programs you might never get a chance to use these promotion ideas !.(you wish)

Have an interesting & adventurous program. Hall, bush, community.

We have seen many groups over the years never having to do advertising. Their program does that. At your various meetings with leaders and youth make sure you have an honest look at the activities. Does the program look great but at the last minute there is always a cancellation? Are the leaders unable to “go bush” for various reasons ?. Lack of imagination ? Address the root cause.

Is the opening and closing ceremony always in the same place ? same games, same activities. Do the scouts always go home dry !, Clean ! . What do they do that they can brag to their mates about ? They need bragging rights at least once a term.

The program needs imagination and input from the members.

Email to existing members, special age groups or any section.

Let your members know that you are looking for say, 8yo cubs as you only have 3 and would like 8. Attach a recruiting flyer to the email and keep the members up to date as the weeks go on. Ask them for suggestions and make them part of the team to find new members. When you get those 8 cubs invite members to a tea & cakes night and have the new chums say a few words (or something at least).

Raise it at the ARP and give them all a pat on the back.

Recruitment posters outdoors

From the drafts available make up your “Recruiting” flyer. Print lots of them!

Put them in an A4 plastic sleeve (waterproof) and stick them all over the suburb for 10 days.

Newspaper & social media adverts.

Open a website and a facebook page. Update it on a regular basis,weekly/fortnightly.

Once a term is not good enough. Many people do not use facebook so also update the website with photos & send an email inviting members to check out your latest activity. Link it with the plan to have a camera in the group.

Ask district/region/state/champions to help.

Once the word gets out someone will volunteer.

District/Region leaders, check your groups and get them all onto social media, with some help.

Facebook page

A couple of times a year pay facebook to “Boost Event”. $50 may reach hundreds of families. Have an open night in say February and July as special nights and build it into your group program with the other suggestions below (then Boost on facebook)

School newsletters. Primary & High schools (if available).

The best responses are to invitations to specific nights/activities.

An add saying “there are” cubs and scouts will not get good results.

Call the school and ask what the format & rules are. Newsletter rules vary with each school. Keep interesting invitations in the high schools for scouts & venturers.

Put a notice in each term if getting low on numbers but not always saying there is just a scout group but always telling about an activity in the past or coming up.

This is part of the ongoing education of families.

Run a special open night that you & they can focus on.

Or maybe congratulations to school scout members who have achieved awards or leaders that have achieved awards.

\*\*\*\*\*\*Just think of something that you as a parent would like to read.\*\*\*\*\*\*

Plan the section night to be held in the school hall or at a fete.

One group planned the Joey mob night at the local school with the help of the principal. School newsletter invitation said no fees. Two nights at the school from 5.45 to 6.45 & kids coming from every where (not only the school).

The 3rd night was at the Scout hall. Halloween or something special

Another two weeks at the school (now 20 joeys).

Plan a group hall night eg we are all going on a Cruise/flight/

Build into the Term program setting up a cruise liner in the hall and send invites to parents and friend to book a holiday. Plan getting aboard, seating, sundeck, entertainment, gang show, food, waiters, life boat drill, man overboard, a captain, 1st mate, engineer, stormy weather lights out, decorations. With everyone involved it is a great activity and parents and friends talk about it for years.

Also “build” a plane and take a flight. Have it at the end of term and have the members all involved.

Bring a Friend.

Keep an eye on the current ages & going up members and be proactive in bringing a friend. This is still one of the most effective membership drives.

Challenge Sally who is you best recruiter to buddy up with Tom who needs some help. See if they can recruit one new member. Issue challenge badge and Bring a Friend badge.

Banners, A4, A3 posters on school/residential fences

Put these out a couple of times a year. Just to “wave the flag”

A4 posters/flyers in shops, public notice boards, school boards

See samples on website that you can modify

“A” Frames in the street outside schools and in prominent places

Purchase or make your own. Move every few days for a few weeks.

Best on the footpath at the approach to the school gates for Joey and Cub mums.

Put them in high foot traffic areas or anywhere!. Put them out in the school holidays.

Real Estate direction boards on the grass.

Put out lots before an Open night. Stick on A4/A3 flyers

Simple ones can be made with corflute and wire coat hangers.

School fetes

Run an activity and stall, good for education.

But to actually recruit members you want a flyer to hand out inviting them to a special night. Work out that night well in advance. Ask for an email and send a welcome email and follow up with a mail inviting them to the special night. Water bombs, campfire, canoeing, caving at the hall, cruise night, flight night, overnight camp. ANYTHING But not one where you are in a the hall all night, even if it is raining, it can be make your own shelter !

BBQ $1 and activities at the local sports ground or skatepark

Put up a sign 10 days in advance and fire up the barbie. Run comps and special challenges. They will ask you to come back. Let them know that you run an adventurous troop and challenge them to join.

Offer them a weekend hike or camp.

Community events.

Man the drink stops on local fun runs, in uniform with signs etc

Attend Anzac day marches. Market days.

Pack the food in plastic bags at Wollies or Coles.

Discuss with the manager.

Cubs in uniform. Accept donations & hand out flyers.

Have signs nearby & a table with flyers.

Letter box drops.

These seem to have a limited success.

Try to aim for the personal contact with people and an invitation to come to special nights.

Open Days or Open Nights ?

Open days. See all the promotion details on State website.

www.nsw.scouts.com.au/members-services/promoting-your-group/

Open nights have the advantage of being on an existing night, local families come for 1-2 hrs. They usually know someone, they will bring neighbours children for that time, you can put on special activities, they usually just want to do several activities and get the hang of scouting & ask questions.

Community & Schools. Do a good turn

After talking to the school assembly I noticed that the school sign at the entrance was a bit mouldy/dirty and it got me thinking that we could have a meeting there next term with the P & C and scrub down the sign, scrub down the classroom walls nearby, paint the outdoor tables and do a bit of gardening 6-8pm.

Talk to the secretary as the ongoing goodwill is invaluable.

Also the school website says they have 170 families that use the before & after school care centre.  I am sure they would like us to hold a meeting there.

Maybe the Joeys hold all their meetings there ! (1 to 7yo).

One Group did hold their Joey meetings at the school hall for 4 weeks , more hopping around & an excellent result.

1st August World Scout day, Scout scarf Day

If you have any suggestions or comments please post to Phil

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