

Guide for Scouts, Venturers and Rovers Supporting Other Sections



There are so many reasons for youth members in the older three Sections (Scouts, Venturer Scouts & Rover Scouts) to spend time providing leadership, support and guidance to other Sections (ranging across all 5 Sections).

Some of the major reasons are:

- A source of easy internal promotion for the older Section, that could lead to more members transitioning between the Sections.
- Support to other Sections is a great way to “contribute to the community” and “to do your duty”, which are fundamental parts of the Australian Scout Promise
- Increases the diversity and range of Section representation at multi-Section events.
- Build partnerships within Sections to help the “2 down” system that is used for Outdoor Adventure Skills, extending this and providing more opportunities for all youth members is very useful.
- Builds the capacity of Project Patrols between Sections by involving a wide range of youth members with opportunities to participate
- Improved group collaboration
- Leadership opportunities with activities and in leadership roles that youth members are not getting in their own Section

Why your Patrol/Section should be involved with younger Sections

The Unit Council and Unit Leaders are always on the lookout for opportunities for all Scouts to develop their leadership opportunities beyond leading other members of their Section. A multi-Section hike, for instance, may offer a less-experienced, younger member of Scouting the opportunity to participate and assist with aspects of the planning or doing of the activity.

Every Scout is offered an opportunity to encourage, support, mentor, train and help develop their peers. This empowerment of youth provides a strong tool that ensures individuals take responsibility and ownership of the program and all Scouts experience a degree of leadership during their journey. When Scouts in the older Sections are offered the opportunity to engage with, lead, and support members from other Sections, it can challenge their leadership qualities in new ways, providing great personal development for all involved.

Providing support and leadership to younger Sections helps to transform older Scouts into mentors and role models that younger Scouts may call upon when they need support and help. Being a role model to the younger Sections means that as a youth member you exhibit qualities such as responsibility, camaraderie, approachability, friendliness, and strong communication skills. It is important for youth members in positions of mentorship, and ones that act as role models to younger youth members, to spend time developing the skills mentioned above, so that they are the best mentor and role model that they can be.

Leadership is a responsibility shared between youth and youth, youth and adults, adults and adults. Whilst an artificial hierarchy may exist within Scouting, no individual’s contributions or opinions should be valued less than the person next to them. Providing a consistent, encouraged platform for youth to lead is one of the key benefits of Scouting’s non-formal education model.

Leadership opportunities are an important part of the development of young people in Scouting. These opportunities may be formal or informal. Informal leadership opportunities are available to Scouts at any age in the program. They can appear spontaneously or be planned. Examples of informal leadership include mentoring new members to the Section, assisting others in activities, running a game, coordinating packing for a camp, and teaching other Scouts a new skill.

Supporting younger Sections in this manner can be a source of excitement and activity possibilities that may not have been possible, or as meaningful, in the past. Running multi-Section camps and activities allow for the development of friendships and strong bonds between youth members of different Sections, pushing youth members to do activities that they may not have been able to before. For example, Cub Scouts in a Group may not experience much of the Outdoor Adventure Skills, perhaps because some of the adult Leaders are not comfortable taking a Patrol of Cub Scouts out hiking. If the local Venturer Scout Unit, or Rover Scout Unit is proficient in hiking then they may provide opportunities for those Cub Scouts to experience Outdoor Adventure Skills and hiking.

Scouting works to ensure that all Scouts have an opportunity to lead at some stage, whether in a Unit Patrol, Project Patrol, as a Unit Leader, or in another capacity. Each Scout in the Unit is unique and possesses different leadership qualities and potential, so each formal leadership position within the Unit has been created to cater for this. Formal leadership positions include Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Unit Leader and Project Patrol Leader. All leadership positions within the Unit are subject to review by the Unit Council, including the duration of the appointment and changing needs of the Unit.

Some Scouts will make excellent Unit Leaders, and some will excel at being Project Patrol Leaders. It is important for the Unit to consider this diversity and the specific development needs of each individual Scout when making selections. It is important to realise, however, that whilst a Scout may not be ready for a role yet, that the Unit can offer many opportunities for skill development. These include being a Project Patrol Leader in an activity they are comfortable with, assisting or leading Challenges, and informal leadership opportunities in order to develop their skills to be ready for a particular formal leadership role.

Use the following checklist for multi-Section youth leadership to make sure you are on the right track:

- I can guide, empower and support young people to lead
- I provide support to the events/activities I attend
- I am a good representative of my Section and I am a good role model for young people of all ages
- I utilise youth leading, adults supporting, and recognise that my role in other Sections may be in leadership or as a support to the youth members in that Section.
- I can adapt and be flexible to the unexpected circumstances that occur
- I can comfortably seek help from appropriate sources when required
- I have good communication skills and can consistently guide young people with communicating
- I am able to build relationships and guide the implementation of the patrol system with young people

For further information on the development of youth leadership and areas in which Scouts, Venturer Scouts, and Rover Scouts can help other Sections in Scouting, refer to the Youth Leading, Adults Supporting progression table.