

# Resources for young leaders



## Behaviour and inclusion

Inevitably, when you're managing a team, you'll come across people who you find it trickier to work with. Some people might talk over others, or not listen to instructions. It can be tempting to ignore people and hope that any challenging behaviour will just stop – but it's much better to promote positive behaviour to the group and lead by example. This can be challenging so we've created some tips to help you deliver sessions which everyone can engage with and enjoy.



### Promote the positive

Activities should be an enjoyable experience for everyone. Promoting positive behaviour is essential to help activities run smoothly. It provides a positive foundation and makes sure that activities are fun, engaging and safe for everyone. Promoting positive behaviour can also help people cope with the situation they're in, which reduces the chance of challenging behaviour.

The good news is that we're in the ideal place to expect and promote positive behaviour. Scouts' purpose and method is based on personal development, learning by doing, and enjoyment – and a key part of our Promise is being helpful to others.

### Simple techniques to encourage positive behaviour

- Have a routine for sessions. Make sure there's a clear start and finish and set expectations for what young people, adults, and leaders need to do during that particular session.
- Give people notice when you need them to listen or change what they're doing, for example, by counting down from five to zero. A leader could hold their hand out in front of them and start counting down from five, fold their fingers down with the countdown, and finish with a statement like 'And you're now quiet and listening'. Alternatively, you could use an egg timer with an alarm – just make sure that everyone's OK with the noise the alarm makes.
- Use signals so that you don't need to use your voice all the time. For example, a leader putting their hand in the air means that everyone should stop talking and pay attention.
- Use a red, amber, and green card system. You'd use the amber card when a young person is causing danger or has hurt someone – it gives them five minutes out to go and think about what they did, and then encourage them to talk to a leader about what happened. If their behaviour improves, show them the green card.
- In the long term, praising and rewarding appropriate behaviour is more than focusing on inappropriate behaviour. Get used to providing age-appropriate encouragement and praise.
- Lead by example and remember that you're an influential role model for young people. If you shout, young people will often become louder. Talking very softly can be a good way to draw



participants in, encourage them to listen carefully, and help them to calm down and re-focus.

## Respond to challenges

Challenging behaviour means different things to different people. It's important to create and agree on standards so that everyone understands what behaviours are (and aren't) acceptable.

When it comes to behaviour, one size doesn't always fit all. People with additional needs may need a separate plan to help them manage – this would be part of making reasonable adjustments to make sure they can join in.

When setting clear standards, make sure that:

- They're created as a group where everyone has a say.
- There aren't too many rules.
- They're worded positively – instead of a long list of 'do nots', set expectations with phrases like 'We listen to each other'.
- Everything is written in language that's easy to understand.
- Everyone is accountable to the same standards (including adult leaders).
- There's a clear plan that everyone agrees on that explains what will happen if people don't meet these standards.



For more information, take a look at [the supporting those with additional needs](#) guidance on our website.



## Plan ahead

If you know that some people in your session struggle with behaviour, someone should talk to their usual leaders or their parents and carers. Once you understand more about that young person, you'll be able to plan a session that's accessible for them.

Sensitively ask questions like:

- Are there any recognised triggers for the behaviour at school or Scouts?
- Are there any situations where the young person will find it difficult to cope?
- What methods and strategies have worked well at home, Scouts, and school to help people use alternatives to challenging behaviour?
- What support strategies have worked well at home, Scouts, and school to encourage positive behaviour?
- What do people do at home and school when the behaviour occurs?
- How do you think our team can best support the young person to manage their behaviour?

Make sure to look at our guidance about [working in partnership with parents and carers](#) on our website.

## Know your ABC's

ABC reminds everyone that actions bring consequences. Make sure that everyone understands that if someone breaks the rules, there are clear consequences.

When setting consequences, consider that:

- The appropriate consequences will be different depending on the behaviour itself and the



circumstances.

- You may need to support everyone to understand that everyone is different – some people have individual plans to help them manage their behaviour (for example, if someone has additional needs there may be different consequences, they may have extra support, or adults may communicate with them in a different way).
- You need to be consistent in your approach and treat all young people fairly.
- It's best to use positive language and communication whenever you can.
- You should be assertive in your communication. Learn to project your voice so that everyone can hear, but don't continue to shout. Once you have people's attention, speaking quietly will eventually get them to be quiet and listen. Where necessary, speak firmly without shouting.
- If you're talking about challenging behaviour, focus on the behaviour itself (not the young person). You may find the young person's behaviour challenging, but it isn't 'bad' – and the young person is not challenging or naughty.



## Scouts is for all

Scouts is all about inclusion. In most situations, we can adapt sessions or systems to allow everyone to participate, including people with additional needs. Our approach is to:

- **Be inclusive.** We do our best to provide access to adventure to all young people by making reasonable adaptations.
- **Be realistic and honest.** We recognise that we're not experts. In some situations, young people may need more specialised support. Discuss this with parents/carers to find out what this support could look like, and to make sure they are safe and have a meaningful experience.

When planning and delivering sessions, use the four Cs to make sure they're inclusive and accessible:

1. **Communicate.** Talk to people's parents and carers so that you fully understand the young person's needs.
2. **Choices.** Review the planned programme of activities, focussing on what people can do – not on what they can't do. Use this information to risk assess each activity in the programme and decide if you need to make changes or adjustments.
3. **Coordinate.** Figure out what reasonable adjustments you can safely make – you could speak to other volunteers to explore this. Make sure that all of the leaders involved in the session understand what's going on and what reasonable adjustments you're making. Plan to provide additional leaders where needed.
4. **Collaborate.** Ask parents and carers to prepare people in advance for any changes. It may be helpful to give them your session plan, so they can go through it with their young person before the session

You should make reasonable adjustments that respond to the needs of the individual and remove or reduce any barriers (or support access), by making changes to the:

- Physical environment (for example, how you set up an activity base or the location you choose)
- Way things are done (for example, an activity system or the rules of a game)
- Support provided (for example, the number of instructors you have or the sheets you provide)

'Reasonable adjustments' is a legal term that recognises that situations differ and that people in different settings have different practical resources to help meet someone's needs.

What's 'reasonable' depends on how effective the adjustment is, whether it can actually be done, how much it will cost, and what resources are available. This means it's hard to give examples, because it's different in every situation. You can find out more about [reasonable adjustments](#) on our website.