

A den chief needs to know what is expected if he is going to give the kind of leadership that really helps adult leaders. In some packs, an assistant Cubmaster is given the responsibility of working with den chiefs and making sure they attend Den Chief Conference Training.

When a den chief is appointed for the den, the den leader should sit down with him to talk about Cub Scouting, the den, and what is expected of him. This is particularly important if he was never a Cub Scout. Every den chief should be given a copy of the Den Chief Handbook. Some packs include this expense as part of the pack budget, some training conferences include it as part of the registration fee. Check with your local District Training Chairman. This will help him get off to a good start and show him there are plenty of resources he can use in working with the younger boys. Another important step in training is the Den Chief Training Conference, which is an all day or weekend training event conducted by the District of Council. We suggest that all Cub Scout and WEBELOS den chiefs, WEBELOS den leaders, and the Cubmaster attend together. It is fun and exciting and will be time well spent.

Den leaders should meet with their den chiefs once each month, soon after the pack leaders meeting so pack plans can be shared with him. Carefully review the planned program and give him assignments which he can understand and handle. If he's running a game, go over the rules with him, then suggest how he might explain the game to the younger boys and give him tips on running it. If he's teaching a skill or trick, make sure he knows how and is able to teach it.

After each den meeting the den leader should review with the den chief the plans for the next den meeting. Make sure he understands his assignment. Encourage him to become a resource and research person. This will keep him on the lookout for new ideas for stunts, tricks, and puzzles.

Remember that the den chief is busy. He probably will have more homework than Cub Scouts or WEBELOS Scouts. He has patrol and troop meetings to attend, sports to participate in and watch. And, for some older den chiefs, girls have become important and time consuming. So don't expect more of him than he is able to give, and don't be too disturbed if he's late to an occasional meeting or is forgetful. Help him to understand that you depend on him. He should feel that when you give him a job to do, you are confident that it will be done.

Remember that the den chief is a boy, even though he is older than the Cub Scouts and WEBELOS Scouts. Expect him to act like a boy and you won't be too shocked or surprised by the things he does. But treat him like a young man and you will be pleased when he acts more maturely.

When you give the den chief an assignment, keep an eye open to make sure he doesn't get into difficulty. If he does, offer a helping hand, but do it in such a way

that he knows you're only trying to be helpful and not take over. Let him do his job.

Problems that occur with den chiefs are sometimes because the den chief was simply not mature enough for a leadership role. He may not have been ready to lead instead of being just one of the boys. But, more often than not, problems occur because he **WAS NOT TRAINED**. He didn't understand that a den chief isn't there to play with the Cub Scouts - he's the den leader's activity assistant. The Scoutmaster and Cubmaster should make this clear before the boy is assigned to a den.

-Circle Ten Council, Pow Wow 1998