

SCOUTING AMERICA ORANGE COUNTY COUNCIL



2025 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GROWTH PLAN

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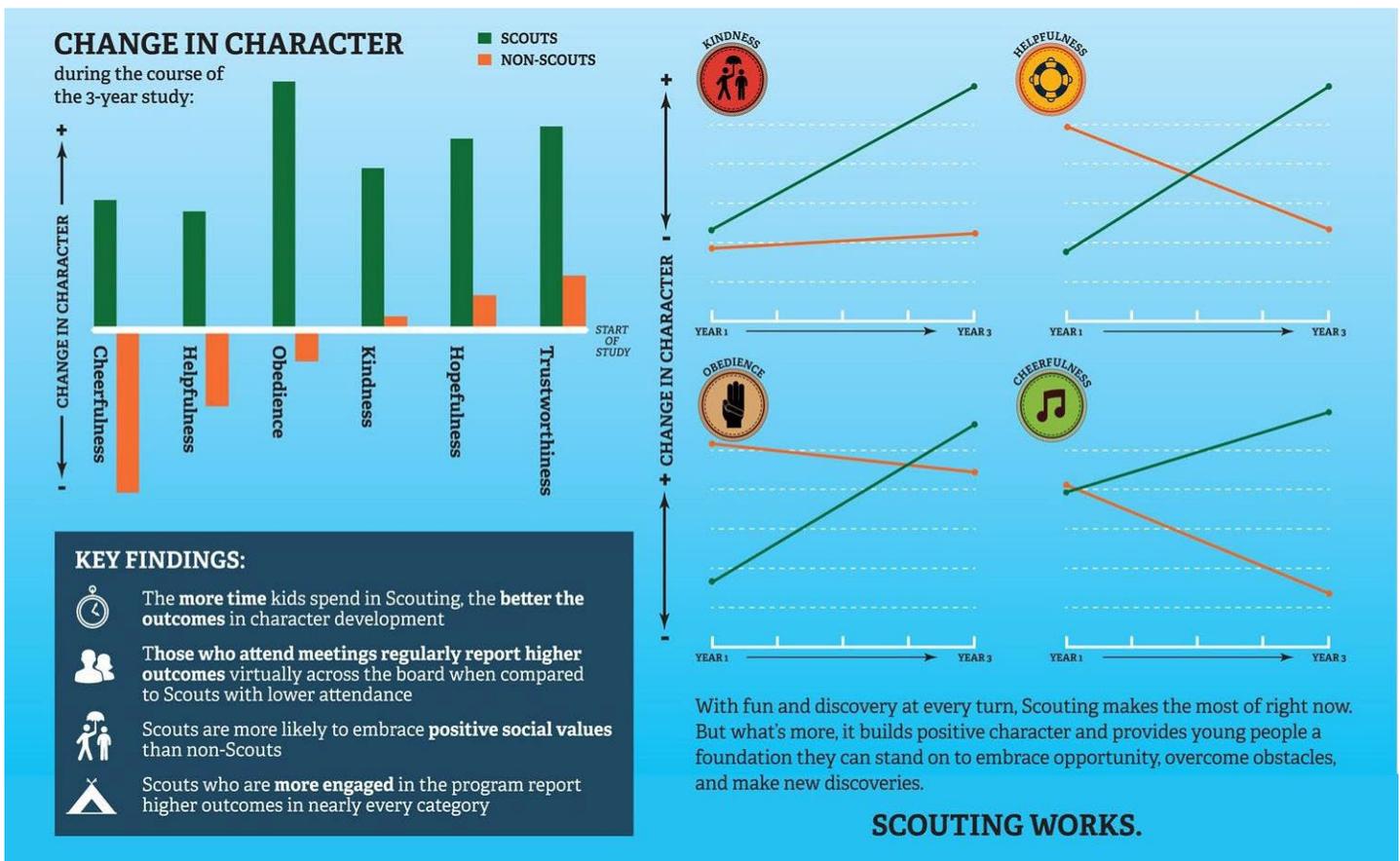


THE IMPORTANCE OF GROWING SCOUTING

To start the conversation, we should remember that our mission as an organization is important. The mission of Scouting 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 Law.

The mission of Scouting America is accomplished through the delivery of the Scouting program by dedicated volunteers who understand the impact Scouting can have on a youth, a family, and on a community. Parents want to feel confident in the organization they plan to join. When parents see a well-organized unit with welcoming leaders and youth, as well as a calendar of fun activities, they are more likely to not only join but also volunteer as leaders.

A recent study conducted by Dr. Richard Lerner and Tufts University has confirmed what Scouting America has believed and thought to be true for many years, Scouting has a worthwhile impact on the lives of youth. The study compared Scouting youth to non-Scouting youth over a period of several years and found an increase in positive character development when compared to non-Scouts.



You can read more about the Tufts study at:

<http://scoutingwire.org/resources-to-help-you-prove-the-value-of-scouting/>

INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

The Orange County Council has not achieved traditional membership growth since before the pandemic. With the recent updates to the Cub Scout program making it Simple, Easy, and Fun, plus a concentrated effort to open all schools in the county, and the expansion of the Exploring and ScoutReach programs, the Council anticipates positive membership growth in 2025.

Cub Scouts (Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears and Webelos from 5 to 10 years old) are traditionally recruited extensively each fall and again in the spring with a focus on youth in kindergarten to build new Lion/Tiger dens. Each Pack dispenses recruiting materials (stickers, flyers, yard signs, etc.) and are encouraged to hold multiple New Friend Activities (NFA's) throughout the year. Scouts BSA (youth 11 to 18 years old) grow mainly from Arrow of Light transition with some small growth from peer-to-peer recruitment. Venturing (Co-ed 14 to 21 years old) gains its growth by retaining older youth who have achieved the Eagle Scout rank at eighteen but still want to remain active in a high adventure program, in addition to reaching out to high school and college students in various recruitment methods.

During 2024 the council identified the need to re-focus on Cub Scout recruiting. In most councils the Cub Scout membership number is usually double that of the Scouts BSA level. In Orange County, our Cub Scout and Scouts BSA numbers are flipped, meaning we have almost double the Scouts BSA members as we do Cub Scouts. A strategic plan was implemented in 2022 to place a focus on growing Cub Scout members.

Some of these opportunities include:

- Identifying/Establishing new Cub Scout Packs "Pack Attack"
- The opening of all schools (every eligible youth should be given the opportunity to join Scouting)
- ScoutReach units in underserved areas of our council service area
- Converting youth who attend Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center, Scout-O-Rama, etc. to Traditional Scouting.

Recruiting efforts have grown from a once-a-year concept to an ongoing effort. With the education and buy-in of our council, district, and unit level volunteers, the Sign-Up Night concept was rolled out in the spring of 2024 as a technique that has shown success in replacing the old Parent Orientation meeting concept previously used. This new concept allows parents/youth who are attending to sign up and pay for their child's membership before they leave the event. The concept is simple, the room is set up with five (5) stations, each station explains a little bit about Scouting in general, what specific activities their unit does throughout the year, explains annual dues and registration costs, identifies new leadership opportunities, and the final station to pay your annual Scouting America membership registration fee of \$160 (plus any unit dues beyond the National fees). That's it they leave registered and paid to join Scouting America and linked to that specific unit. Initial feedback from our millennial families was that the process is a tremendous success. And it only takes twenty-thirty minutes to visit all five stations and go on about their evenings.

STRATEGIES FOR MEMBERSHIP GROWTH - "THE PLAN"

This year our strategies for success will lead to new Lions (Kindergartners), Tigers (1st Graders); Cub Scouts (2nd-5th Graders), 1st Year Scouts BSA (6th Graders), Underserved Markets (ScoutReach) and Explorers.

Key Strategies for Success:

1. New Pack Development

- **Pack Attack** – Orange County’s “*Pack Attack*” campaign will focus on Cub Scout Pack organization and retention and utilizing proven and sustainable best practices that strive for long-term success. Best practices teach us that districts grow Cub Scouting when they develop a new pack growth plan based on their own market needs, as well as a retention plan for existing packs. It will require research, engagement of district/unit volunteers and commitment to the council membership plan.

2. A Coordinated Annual Recruitment Campaign

a. The Orange County Council will conduct three council-wide recruitment activities during the year:

- **Spring Into Scouting** – Utilizing dynamic recruitment techniques (New Friend Activities or aka “NFA’s”) increase the opportunities for youth to join in the first four to six months of the year. This event should serve as a precursor to the summer camp experience. Examples include BBQ’s, ice cream socials, bowling, or hiking.
- **Summer Fun Days** – This will consist of two days before day camp season and two days after day camp season where potential members of Cub Scout age can come to camp for a day and experience the BB range, Archery range, arts & crafts, and nature activities.
- **Scout-o-Rama*** – This activity in early November will be aimed at all eligible youth, and will feature zip-line rides, BB and Archery, and arts & crafts.

3. ScoutReach Expansion

The *ScoutReach* program gives additional leadership and emphasis to urban and rural Scouting programs. ScoutReach is our Council’s commitment to making sure that all young people have an opportunity to join Scouting, regardless of their circumstances, neighborhood, or ethnic background.

- **Identify Underserved Areas** – By using the “*Council Market Analysis Report,*” we are able to identify areas of our council that have high Total Available Youth (TAY) and low current participation in our Scouting programs.
- **Recruit Program Specialists** – With the expansion of Orange County’s ScoutReach program will come the need to recruit “*Program Specialists.*” We welcome currently enrolled students seeking experience to apply for a semester internship. Interns are expected to serve up to 20 hours weekly and will receive a semester stipend. The following majors/minors/degree programs are invited to apply: business, business administration, business management, social work, early education for instance.

4. Transitioning Non-Scout/Outside Group Youth to Traditional Scouting

Although every event strategy could look different from the next, we believe that there are certain elements every post-event strategy should include. Here are our strategies to follow up with our guests:

- Field Staff will ask the participants of each group to join Scouting at an appropriate time during their event/stay. (5-minute or less)
- Outdoor Program staff will send a thank you email to each group within one week after the conclusion of each event.
- Outdoor Program staff will create a photo montage or “reel” of the group’s event/stay, letting our guests relive the entire experience.
- Send each group a link to complete a post-event survey.
- The units/sales team personally follow up (over the phone) to invite them to join.
- Continue sending invitations to upcoming events.

2025 MEMBERSHIP GROWTH GOALS

The Executive Board of Orange County Council, in coordination with National Service Territory 3 of Scouting America has set a goal to grow membership in Orange County by five percent (5%) in traditional programs and in Exploring in 2025. To accomplish this realistic goal, we have created the table below to illustrate how many Scouts each district will need to grow by for us all to WIN! We have also included two years of recruiting history to help each district understand past performance.

District	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Goal (12/31)
Canyons	1,475	1,359	1,427
El Camino Real	734	684	718
Exploring	73	81	85
Golden West	1,396	1,414	1,485
Pacifica	1,680	1,620	1,701
Rancho San Joaquin	1,312	1,214	1,275
Saddleback	1,212	1,121	1,177
Valencia	908	918	964
OCBSA Total =	8,790	8,411	8,832



2025 MEMBERSHIP CYCLE

Year Round

1. Training on www.my.scouting.org for volunteers.
2. Make sales calls for prospective chartered organizations. New units organized.
3. Pursue leads generated from beascout.org and ensure families find units and get the opportunity to participate in the program.
4. Compare participation rosters from council/district activities and events to membership records to ensure that all youth participating in the programs are registered.
5. Effectively communicate with all youth and/or their families who attend outdoor science school, Scout-O-Rama, day-camp, etc. to transition them into traditional Scouting units.

January

1. The spring round-up plan is shared with you at your Council Growth Planning Conference.
2. Discussions of Family Scouting with Packs interested in offering the program in their unit.
3. Analyze the previous year's monthly membership data and determine monthly membership goals and assess new-unit needs within your district.
4. Complete an Arrow of Light-to-Scout transition plan.
5. Key 3 reviews membership validation procedures and completes unit health assessments.
6. Begin securing pack participation in spring recruiting as well as locations for fall sign-up nights.

February

1. Begin contacting superintendents and principals to secure their support for spring and fall recruiting. School access survey sent mid-February.
2. Conduct an activity interest survey for Venturing. This will make it so you can invite young people to participate in Venturing units that specialize in specific activities.
3. Recruit new unit organizers to assist you in the start of new units.
4. Arrow of Light's have begun to cross over to Scouts BSA troops. Make sure all Arrow of Light's are tracked and contacted to determine which troop they are going to join.

March

1. Finalize contacting superintendents and principals to secure their support for spring and fall recruiting. Confirm the process for flier distribution and the potential for school visits promotions.
2. Recruit a Cub Scout sign-up night chair, new-unit organizers, and new member coordinators.
3. Determine your district's low point for membership. This is the number of youths you have after any youth drop during unit renewal, or if the unit is dropping.
4. Set date for phone-a-thon to contact youth that didn't re-enroll in Scouting.
5. Mail out interest cards for dropped youth.

April

1. Spring recruiting efforts begin.
2. Units conduct "Normal Friend Activities" & Peer-to-Peer/Parent-to-Parent dynamic recruitment efforts.
3. Conduct a phone-a-thon for dropped youth.
4. Prepare and deliver recruiting fliers for spring recruiting for packs, troops, and crews.
5. Conduct spring youth talks in schools.

May

1. Complete recruiting and training of both district and unit volunteers for fall recruiting.
2. Continue spring recruiting efforts until school gets out for the summer.
3. Complete the securing of locations for fall sign-up nights.

2025 MEMBERSHIP CYCLE (CONTINUED)

June

1. Develop a plan to have units populate pins on beascout.org.
2. Follow up on fall recruitment nights.
3. Conduct health review for all units. Identify and develop a revitalization plan for each unit in danger of dropping.
4. Implement the plan.

July

1. Begin publicity for the fall recruiting campaign.
2. Make sure all units have populated beascout.org pins.

August/September

1. Conduct flier distribution and/or youth talks for all schools and alternate sign-up night locations.
2. Post yard signs and banners and keep them up for as long as possible.
3. Assist units in conducting school sign-up nights or joining programs as scheduled.
4. Make sure the district training team is prepared to train new leaders and parents.
5. Follow up with the units that have completed a sign-up night to ensure that applications for new members and leaders have been submitted to the council service center.

October

1. Prepare and deliver to schools a second group of recruiting fliers.
2. Continue recruiting rallies and any follow-up opportunities.
3. Commissioners conduct membership inventories, ensuring that all members are registered/participating in the program, assisting with charter renewal of units by the end of the year. Set date for phone-a-thon to contact youth that didn't re-enroll in Scouting.
4. Follow-up with units that have completed a sign-up night or additional joining event to ensure that applications for new members/leaders have been submitted to the council service center or completed online and accepted.

November

1. Continue to conduct recruiting sign-up nights and follow-up opportunities to join for all units, schools, and alternate rally locations.
2. Achieve the membership goal.
3. Make sure commissioners are working with units to complete charter renewal efforts.
4. Follow up with units that have completed a sign-up night or additional joining event to ensure applications for new members/leaders have been submitted to the council service center.

December

1. Finalize the registration of any new units that have not completed the process.
2. Compare rosters submitted at charter renewal, ensure all new youth are registered.
3. Continue sign-up events and follow-up strategies.
4. Commissioners' complete Membership Inventory and ensure all youth are registered.
5. Make sure all leads from beascout.org have joined a unit and are participating.

VOLUNTEER INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARTNERSHIP

Currently the Membership Team consists of the **Council Vice Chair of Membership** and the **District Membership Chairs**. It is the goal of the membership committee to recruit sub-committee chairs in the following areas: **Membership/New Member Coordinator; Religious Relationships, Education Relationships, and Community Relationships**. In addition, the rekindling of the council, district, and unit **New Member Coordinator** position, recruitment and retention has the potential to be a game changer at the Pack level moving forward. In the next several pages you will find a position description for the volunteers who comprise the Membership Committee for the Council:

FOR THE POSITION OF: **Vice Chair of Membership/Relationships**

KEY MEETINGS: Executive Committee and
Board meetings
Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. meetings

POSITION CONCEPT: Responsible to the Council Board Chair to recruit and build a volunteer committee structure to ensure steady, balanced membership growth throughout the Council, paying particular attention to areas of special need, while maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with chartered organizations and other community and youth-serving groups within the Council's territory.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Develop, with the assistance of the Scout Executive and Director of Field Service, the Council's long-range membership plan and annual membership goals, as well as the membership portion of the council's strategic plan and gain the participation and buy-in from the District Membership Chairs for implementation at the district level.
2. Direct the work of the Membership/Relationships Committee. Recruit, train, and motivate Scouters to serve on the committee and help them carry out their functions effectively.
3. Promote membership growth in Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, Venturing & Sea Scouting, Exploring, and ScoutReach through the membership cycle, coordinating youth recruiting and new-unit organization. Plan and help the districts carry out sign-up nights, new-unit campaigns, and other elements of the membership cycle.
4. Monitor achievement monthly; be alert to deviations or trends that demand a response; strive to maintain monthly balanced growth and improved membership retention in all programs.
5. Attend Executive Committee and Board meetings, reporting to the board in the field of responsibility, while lending expertise to the decision-making process.
6. Gather annual school enrollment statistics to determine market penetration as an aid for determining new-unit organization needs.
7. Give attention to youth with special needs, those in rural areas, those in low-income areas, etc.
8. Develop and expand relationships between Chartered Organizations and the Council.
9. Cultivate community organizations, groups, and associations that might become Chartered Organizations or support Scouting in other ways.
10. Meet with the District Membership Chairs monthly and at the Council's Coordinated meetings to plan, share ideas, and for training.
11. Actively fulfill the responsibilities of a Council Executive Board Member.

Volunteer Infrastructure and Partnership (continued)

FOR THE POSITION OF:

Council New Member Coordinator (NMC) Chair

KEY MEETINGS:

Executive Committee and
Board meetings (as needed)
Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. Meetings

POSITION CONCEPT: Sustaining strong membership of a council depends both on having new members join units (recruitment) and on ensuring that young people and their families are engaged and develop a strong sense of belonging (retention). The role of the Council New Member Coordinator is to support districts and units in engaging New Member Coordinators to work toward both keys to success.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Council New Member Coordinators serve as advocates, promoters, ambassadors, mentors, supporters, colleagues, champions, and cheerleaders for District and Unit New Member Coordinators.

Council New Member Coordinators **lead the council's team effort to strengthen membership in the council through collaboration with New Member Coordinators at all levels.** They are expected to:

- **Share** the New Member Coordinator concept, ensuring council-wide awareness of the benefits of units' having one or more New Member Coordinators
- **Shape** the role of New Member Coordinators in the council so that the district and units benefit from NMC engagement and so that New Member Coordinators are welcomed, trained, and supported
- **Own** the council's New Member Coordinator collaborative infrastructure so that the council feels agency and pride in NMC team accomplishments

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Council New Member Coordinators are encouraged and expected to:

1. Establish goals and action plans for achieving high numbers and percentages of registered and trained New Member Coordinators in units throughout the council.
2. Take the lead in building an orientation program for District New Member Coordinators and assist districts in presenting orientation for New Member Coordinators in units.
3. Become familiar with information and ideas on New Member Coordinator electronic platforms including the NMC website and the NMC Facebook page.
4. Collaborate with the District Membership teams in emphasizing the role of New Member Coordinator in starting new units and in action planning for unit recruitment and retention.
5. Establish and facilitate ongoing communication by promoting the New Member Coordinator concept and sharing successful practices in implementing the concept.
6. Facilitate New Member Coordinator learning through conferences and person-to-person mentoring.
7. Oversee participation of local New Member Coordinators in district membership planning.
8. Provide resources and assistance to New Member Coordinators in developing action plans and implementing welcoming initiatives for their units.
9. Present updates to the Council on New Member Coordinator progress and successes
10. Recognize and celebrate the efforts and accomplishments of New Member Coordinators

Volunteer Infrastructure and Partnership (continued)

FOR THE POSITION OF:

Scouting for Youth with Special Needs Chair

KEY MEETINGS:

Council Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. Meetings (as needed)

POSITION CONCEPT: A Council Advisory Committee on youth with special needs may report to either the council executive board or the council membership committee to help all council structures provide the most effective Scouting program for youth with mental health and special needs.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Help the Council increase the percentage of young people with mental health and special needs served.
 2. Help the Council gain a better awareness of people with mental health and special needs.
 3. Develop good Council working relationships with organizations and individuals in the community that have special understanding about people with mental health and special needs.
 4. Advise the Council on plans, programs, and techniques to better serve youth with mental health and special needs.
-

FOR THE POSITION OF:

Community Relationships Chair

KEY MEETINGS:

Council Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. Meetings (as needed)

The Community Relationships Subcommittee also meets quarterly or more often as needed.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Support service and fraternal groups.
2. Relate to all central labor councils and labor unions.
3. Coordinate efforts in underserved areas to help understand, relate to, and develop Scouting.
4. Develop other areas of focus based on the specific needs of the council, especially related directly to key ethnic populations.
5. Ensure successes of Scouting are reported to the organization heads within the Council.

Volunteer Infrastructure and Partnership (continued)

FOR THE POSITION OF: **Religious Relationships Chair**

KEY MEETINGS: Council Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. Meetings (as needed)

POSITION CONCEPT: In addition to the religious relationship's representatives on the Council Committee, Councils may also wish to form Protestant, Jewish, Catholic, Methodist, or other Advisory Committees on Scouting. They can provide helpful liaison between the religious organizations and Scouting. This can be tailored or expanded to fit local needs.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Provide religious support and worship services at council and district events such as camporees, Scouting shows, Cub Scout Day camps, and other Council and district events.
2. Provide a Chaplaincy Program for all Council long-term camps and contingents.
3. Provide incentives, materials, and guidance for all Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturers interested in earning the Religious Emblems of their faith.
4. Provide a monitoring service for the Council to make sure Scouting activities do not conflict with designated religious holidays and major religious practices.
5. Serve as a resource for religious groups to help them use the Scouting program as an effective ministry with youth, especially through the relationships conference. Provide committee support to the council in searching out prospective religious organizations that could become chartered organizations using the Scouting program.
6. Assist the Membership Committee with resource personnel as plans are developed for together plans, Joining Nights for Scouting, roundups, and membership promotion functions.
7. Provide districts with a directory of all potential chartered organizations in the district tabulated by faith/denomination.
8. Ensure Scouting successes in Council are reported to institutional heads.

The subcommittee meets quarterly, with each denominational group gathering individually for a period of time and later reassembling for a discussion of total Council needs and support. The respective religious groups may meet more often. These committees may not be formed on a district level.

Volunteer Infrastructure and Partnership (continued)

FOR THE POSITION OF:

Educational Relationships Chair

KEY MEETINGS:

Council Membership Committee meetings
Council Top Hands and Ops. Meetings (as needed)

POSITION CONCEPT: It is advisable to establish an Education Relationships Subcommittee that meets quarterly or more often as needed.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Act in close liaison with Council leadership to maintain or regain Scouting access to schools.
2. Constantly monitor developments and changes in local school systems concerning policies and procedures that could affect the operation of Scouting.
3. Strengthen relationships with all community education systems to provide for their cooperation.
4. Promote efforts with all parent-teacher groups to understand their purposes, goals, objectives, and their current program emphasis. Develop a working relationship with the local Council in support of its purpose.
5. Invite representatives from the private sector, public libraries, and youth correction agencies to consider the use of the Scouting program and/or provide support services.
6. Ensure that the successes of Scouting in the council are reported to local, regional, and state school boards, etc.



DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The Orange County Council was formed in 1920. It is currently comprised of seven (7) districts and one (1) Exploring division. The council covers 239 different ZIP codes with varying demographics.

The 2025 census population estimate of Orange County is 3,151,816 and if current trends continue by 2025, could hit 3,188,524 which is a 1.2% change. Although single-family homes make up the dominant landscape for most of the county, Northern and Central Orange County is relatively more urbanized and denser as compared to those areas south of Irvine, which are less dense, though still contiguous, and primarily suburban rather than exurban.

Analysis

By using the available resources each district is asked to answer the following:

1. Where can we step up recruiting efforts in existing units?
2. Where should we look to start new units in underserved areas?
3. Which units have successful recruitment and retention so they can be used as examples of best practices?
4. How do we effectively communicate our program to fit the needs of the community being served?
5. What tools should we use when recruiting and retaining youth and families?

Orange County Council served the following number of youths:

	2024 Youth Served	2025 Estimate of TAY
Cub Scout Age	3,489	216,255
Scouts BSA Age	4,431	115,438
Venturing Age (including Exploring)	491	119,187
Total Available Youth	8,411	450,880

Market share measures the number of youths being served to the number of available youths. *Retention rate* is the number of youths who participate year over year and is often a good measure of the value of the program.

	Average Market Share	Retention Rate	Youth Served
Orange County Council	1.8%	76%	8,411
National Service Territory 3	1.5%	71%	88,776
National	2.0%	62%	1,025,580

Based on data we receive from the United States Census we are then able to determine the Total Available Youth (TAY) in each geographic district.

District	Potential Cub Scouts	Potential Boy Scouts	Potential Venturers	Total Available Youth (TAY)
Canyons	34,047	17,945	18,278	70,270
El Camino Real	21,083	10,976	10,858	42,917
Golden West	76,233	40,158	40,132	156,523
Pacifica	31,196	16,378	16,441	64,015
Rancho San Joaquin	22,505	11,359	11,037	44,901
Saddleback	41,892	23,388	24,603	89,883
Valencia	49,795	26,368	26,687	102,850
OCBSA Total =	276,751	146,572	148,036	571,359

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND (CONTINUED)

Once we know the Total Available Youth (TAY) in each District we can use our year-end membership figures to see what our Market Density currently is. At the end of 2024, out of every one-hundred eligible youth in Orange County we served approximately only one and a half.

District	Total Available Youth (TAY)	2024 Year End Membership	Market Density (Percentage of TAY served)
Canyons	70,270	1,475	2.09%
El Camino Real	42,917	734	1.71%
Golden West	156,523	1,396	0.89%
Pacifica	64,015	1,680	2.62%
Rancho San Joaquin	44,901	1,312	2.92%
Saddleback	89,883	1,212	1.34%
Valencia	102,850	908	0.88%
OCBSA Total =	571,359	8,790	1.53%

Using the mosaics and numbers from the 2024 Council Market Analysis for Orange County, the Top 5 segments with Cub Scouts are:

Mosaic Segment	% of Cubs Scouts
B10 - Cosmopolitan Achievers	10.3%
C13 - Philanthropic Sophisticates	7.7%
H26 - Progressive Assortment	4.5%
A01 - American Royalty	3.9%
F22 - Fast Track Couples	3.8%

The Top 5 underserved Cub Scout Markets (High Total Available Youth and Low Market Share):

Zip Code	Total Cub Scout Members	Total Cub Scout TAY	Cub Scout Market Share	Potential for New Chartering Org.
92704	21	7,834	0.3%	YES
92804	29	7,555	0.4%	YES
92805	15	7,215	0.2%	YES
92701	6	6,338	0.1%	YES
92703	10	6,191	0.2%	YES

These markets all reside within the Golden West district cities of Santa Ana and Anaheim.



SCOUTING AMERICA

ORANGE COUNTY COUNCIL

2 Irvine Park Road, Orange, CA 92869