

After roaring success, Lions will move from pilot to full-time part of Cub Scouting

February 14, 2018 Bryan Wendell Scouting Tips 4 Comments



A girl in a Lion den in an early adopter Cub Scout pack shows off her Pinewood Derby car.

On the heels of a successful pilot that introduced new families to Scouting and raised retention rates, Lions, the BSA's Cub Scout program for kindergarten-age youth, will become an official part of Cub Scouting this year.

The decision was made official after a vote this week by the BSA's volunteer-led National Executive Board.

The Lions uniform won't change. Lions will continue wearing the blue Lion T-shirt. There's also an optional cap and new neckerchief and slide. All are suitable for wearing with the T-shirt.

But many exciting changes are on the way based on feedback from families participating in the pilot. These include the introduction of a rectangular rank patch, rank cards, advancement chart and Lion adventure loops.

Keep reading for details about these new items, which will be available in late summer — in time for the start of the fall program.

Can all packs offer Lions?

Absolutely! Lions are official nationwide, meaning that, beginning this fall, any unit in any council has the green light to begin recruiting new Lions and their families. (Previously, the BSA needed to approve individual councils and units to offer Lions.)

The rank is an official part of Cub Scouting — just like Tiger, Wolf, Bear and Webelos.

Lions offers a great opportunity for your pack to serve more families. Packs that participated in the Lions pilot program saw an 87 percent retention rate, steady growth and excellent parental involvement.



When can my pack begin welcoming Lions?

This fall — as part of the 2018-2019 program year.

What are these new Lion adventure loops?

Lions, like their older packmates, will get to earn adventure loops.

Over the course of a year, Lions will complete all five of the required adventures (compared to at least seven for Tiger and above). They also may complete one or more of the nine elective adventures.

Adventure loops are immediate recognition items, meaning packs should present them to Lions right away — not wait until a big event like a blue and gold. Adventure loops should be worn with pride on the Cub Scout belt.

Lion adventure loops, as well as a Lion advancement chart, will be available in your council's Scout Shop by late summer.

Do Lions come to every pack meeting?

Lions should participate in at least two or three pack meetings a year. Ultimately, it's up to the family. If they'd like to attend more pack meetings, they are welcome.

Lions can also have lots of fun doing elective adventures and earning additional adventure loops beyond what's required.

Can Lions camp?

Yes. Lions can participate in family camping with their pack.

Lion dens shouldn't participate in overnight den-specific camping, but pack and family camping are encouraged. Day camp and activities such as shooting sports are reserved for older Cub Scouts. Lion dens should focus on exciting (and age-appropriate) adventures and fun family outings.

Can Lions participate in the Pinewood Derby?

Yep! You can include Lions in your pack's regular Pinewood Derby routine or encourage Lions to use the wedge car available at Scout Shops — no cutting required.



Will Lions wear the blue Cub Scout uniform shirt?

No. They'll wear the blue Lion T-shirt and blue Cub Scout belt. The hat, neckerchief and neckerchief slide are optional and can be worn after the completion of the "Gizmos and Gadgets" adventure.



What is the Lion rank strip?

Once Lions complete their rank, they can wear the rectangular Lion patch on the upper left of their T-shirt. (That's the Lion's left, or over his or her heart.)

When Lions move into Tigers, they can sew the patch under the left pocket — below where the Tiger rank patch will go.

The previously introduced diamond-shaped Lion patch is going away.

Do Lions now earn Bobcat first before working on the Lion rank?

No, Lions work on their Lion rank first. When they become a Tiger, they'll begin to work on Bobcat.

Are Lion Guides now called den leaders?

Yes. The BSA has changed the name to better align with the rest of Cub Scouting. The position's responsibilities have not changed. Lion den leaders still facilitate and engage families so that each family takes a turn leading one den meeting and outing.

Where can I get more info?

The BSA will update its Lions website with more details over the coming days. I'll add that link here when it's ready.

If you ever get stuck, contact the BSA's Member Care line at 972-580-2489 or MyScouting@Scouting.org.