

	Gasóga na hÉireann/Scouting Ireland			
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	Source: National Management Committee			
<b>Scouting Ireland – Youth &amp; Adult Involvement Policy</b>				
Revision	Date	Description		
#	14/12/2003	Document Issued		
A	29/01/2011	Document Revised		
B	25/11/2012	Cub Forum Ammended, An Chéim Ammended		

**Principles:**

1. Scouting Ireland is part of a world-wide educational youth movement. An essential part of scouting is the interaction of Young People and Adults.
2. Scouting is a movement of young people, supported by adults.
3. Youth involvement is a process that ensures youth have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. It creates volunteer opportunities for youth to be a part of the changes and decisions being made in their communities.<sup>1</sup>

**Scouting Ireland believes that:**

1. Age appropriate Youth Involvement is a fundamental aspect of Scouting.
2. Youth Involvement occurs first and foremost in the Scout Group, then in support structures of Scouting Ireland and in the community.
3. Scouting should aim for, and achieve, the highest level of Youth Involvement. WOSM defines this as; 'Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults'.<sup>2</sup>
4. In all activities involving Youth Members, the Scout Method should be used to achieve the aims of the association.
5. Youth Programme should provide for the expression of views and for the training of Youth Members in practical skills of decision-making and leadership in Scouting and in the wider community.
6. The role of the Adult Scouter is to encourage and facilitate the progressive personal development of the youth members through a rich and varied partnership with them.

<sup>1</sup> WOSM 'Youth Involvement, Youth Empowerment', Toolbox Programme Handouts (Geneva 2005), 4.

<sup>2</sup> 'Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults: Adults are involved as facilitators for the goals of the young people, directing them to needed resources, providing support in developing necessary skills, and helping them to evaluate. This type of relationship enhances learning for the young people, builds a sense of community ownership of the project, and provides adults with the opportunity to learn from the enthusiasm and creativity of young people. Generally, the assumption is that it is better to aim for the highest level of participation. However, different levels of participation may be appropriate to given situations.' WOSM 'Youth Involvement, Youth Empowerment', Toolbox Programme Handouts (Geneva 2005), 20. This definition is based on Roger Hart's 'Ladder of Participation'.

7. At all levels and in all situations, an appropriate balance must be struck between the complementary roles of Youth Members and Adult Scouters.

Scouting Ireland should, where appropriate, work with relevant Statutory Bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations in developing resources and support for Youth Members and Adult Scouters in achieving the objectives of this Youth and Adult Involvement Policy.

In accordance with this policy, the National Management Committee shall ensure that Scout Groups are provided with appropriate and detailed resource material in order to assist them in achieving the objectives of this policy. Initiatives to promote Youth Involvement at all levels of Scouting Ireland should be carried out in accordance with this policy.

***Shared Decision Making: A Road Map to Success in Seven Steps***

<b>STEP ONE</b>	<p><b>The Individual and the Patrol<sup>3</sup></b></p> <p>Each Youth Member will be responsible for his / her own personal journey and self development through the use of the Scout Method; whilst being mentored by Adult Scouters.</p> <p>The Patrol System is an important part of the development process by focussing the efforts of Youth Members on responsibility, which in turn leads to the development of character.</p> <p>This unique learning community is structured on the Scout Method and harnesses Involvement and Shared Decision Making, through Adult Scouters working with and alongside the Patrol structure in each section.</p>	<p><b>Suggested timeframe</b></p> <p><i>Continuous - All Year Round</i></p>
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<sup>3</sup> Refers to the most fundamental and basic unit of Scouting and can be substituted with the terms Lodge / Six / Peer Group etc.

**STEP TWO**

**The Scout Group**

The Scout Group will involve Youth Members in decision-making alongside the support network of Adult Scouters.

Such partnerships prepare young people to take on roles and responsibilities at other levels within Scouting Ireland and in the broader community.

In Scouting, as an educational movement, the concrete implementation of the Scout Method is the first and fundamental element on which Youth and Adult Involvement and Shared Decision Making is based.

The Group Leader will attend, at least twice a year, the Programme Section based Fora<sup>4</sup> to listen, engage with and support its members.

The Group Council will, at least twice a year, invite the members of the Programme Section based Fora to attend a meeting of the Group Council to allow them make representation to, and assist in the decision making process on issues affecting them directly.

The Programme Section based Fora shall have the right to attend and make submissions and nominations to the Group Council at any stage during the year through the Group Secretary.

**Suggested timeframe**

*Continuous - All Year Round*

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<sup>4</sup> Refers to Beaver Section Log Chew, Cub Scout Pack Forum, Scout Patrol Leaders Council / Court of Honour, Venture Scout Executive and Rover Scout Crew.

**STEP THREE**

**The Scout County**

The Scout County will provide and facilitate a platform whereby like minded young people and adults representing the Scout Groups within, can express their views and formulate recommendations.

Structures are established to enable both Youth Members and Adult Scouters to discuss issues effecting them in both a Scouting and broader community context.

Youth Members and Adult Scouters through giving them the opportunity of Involvement and Shared Decision Making harness and promote the concept of active citizenship through the use of the Scout Method.

Each Scout County must hold Youth / Involvement Fora in line with the suggested methods endorsed by the National Management Committee and WOSM.

The County Commissioner will ensure that a County Youth / Involvement Forum takes place at least once per year for each of the following Programme Sections:

- Cub Scouts
- Scouts
- Venture Scouts
- Rover Scouts

Each Scout Group will send to the respective Scout County, at least the following representation to each individual Youth / Involvement Forum:

- Cub Scouts
- Scouts
- Venture Scouts
- Rover Scouts

The Scout County Board shall, following each of the Programme Section Fora, invite 4 elected representatives from each to attend a meeting of the County Board to allow them make representation to and assist in the decision making process on issues affecting them directly.

The representatives shall have the right to attend and make submissions and nominations to the Scout County Board at any stage during the year through the County Secretary.

**Suggested timeframe**

*July - November*

## **The Scout Province**

Interaction between Patrol level and the support structures of Scouting Ireland, participation and democracy are the necessary conditions for a dynamic and efficient Scouting Ireland. The Scout Province with this in mind would organise Youth / Involvement Fora at least once per annum:

Each Scout Province must hold Youth / Involvement Fora in line with the suggested methods endorsed by the National Management Committee and WOSM.

The Provincial Commissioner will ensure that a Provincial Youth / Involvement Forum takes place at least once per year for each of the following Programme Sections to facilitate the coming together of (separate venues / shared venue):

- Cub Scouts
- Scouts
- Venture Scouts
- Rover Scouts

### **Suggested timeframe**

*October - December*

The Youth / Involvement Forum in the case of Cub Scouts shall take the form of a Youth Leadership Forum as per the structure laid down by the National Youth Programme Committee

Each Scout County will send to the respective Scout Province, at least the following representation to each individual Youth / Involvement Forum:

- 4 Cub Scouts
- 4 Scouts
- 4 Venture Scouts
- 4 Rover Scouts

The members of each Scout Province Youth / Involvement Fora will elect respectively, the following delegates to represent the Scout Province at the National Youth / Involvement Fora:

- 6 Scouts
- 6 Venture Scouts
- 6 Rover Scouts

<b>STEP FIVE</b>	<p><b>National Youth / Involvement Fora</b></p> <p>National Youth / Involvement Fora shall be organised in order to facilitate and underpin the sentiments of this policy with respect to the Youth Member &amp; Adult Scouter Involvement Principles with respect to Shared Decision Making.</p> <p>The members of each National Youth / Involvement Forum will be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 Scouts per Scout Province</li> <li>• 6 Venture Scouts per Scout Province</li> <li>• 6 Rover Scouts per Scout Province</li> </ul>	<p><b>Suggested timeframe</b></p> <p><i>January - March</i></p>
<b>STEP SIX</b>	<p><b>Continuous Involvement</b></p> <p>Scouting Ireland will engage in Involvement and Shared Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>internally</i>, ensuring that Youth Members and Young Adult Scouters are listened to and involved in decision-making and planning within their own organisation;</li> <li>• <i>externally</i>, supporting the Youth Members and Young Adult Scouters to get involved in public decision making and address issues that are of concern to them.</li> </ul> <p><b>The National Youth / Involvement Fora</b></p> <p>The National Youth / Involvement Fora over the course of the year will actively report progress to and engage with the following and not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Management Committee</li> <li>• Provincial Management / Support Teams</li> <li>• National Youth Programme Committee</li> <li>• National Adult Resources Committee</li> <li>• National Council</li> <li>• National Spiritual &amp; religious Advisory Panel</li> <li>• National Youth Council of Ireland</li> <li>• Statutory Bodies and Non-Governmental Organisations<sup>5</sup></li> </ul>	<p><b>Suggested timeframe</b></p> <p><i>Continuous - All Year Round</i></p>

<sup>5</sup> Managed by and consultation with the National Management Committee / National Team for Policy Implementation and Coordination.

**STEP SEVEN**

**An Chéim [The National Youth Conference]**

The National Youth / Involvement Fora collectively, will be responsible for the organising and hosting of An Chéim, a single venue conference with facilities provided to encourage and enable the Youth Members in attendance to express their views in relation to youth related issue both in Scouting Ireland and the broader community.

It is envisaged that An Chéim will take place at least every 3 years to facilitate the Scout, Venture Scout and Rover Scout Programme Sections

The membership of An Chéim is open to all Scout Groups. When An Chéim for the relevant Programme Section is scheduled, it is encouraged that the following as a minimum participate

- 1 Scout per programme section
- 1 Venture Scout per programme section
- 1 Rover Scout per programme section
- Members of the National Youth / Involvement Fora

The conference will be structured and organised in such a manner as to ensure age appropriate interaction, programme and accommodation.

Youth representation from other appropriate organisations shall be invited to attend An Chéim at the discretion of the National Youth / Involvement Fora.

**Suggested timeframe**

*August - November*

## Commitments at National Level

### **National Youth Programme Committee**

Representatives from each of the following sections as elected to the National Youth / Involvement Fora:

- 3 Scouts
- 3 Venture Scouts
- 3 Rover Scouts

shall be members of the National Youth Programme Committee.

### **Suggested timeframe**

### **National Management Committee**

*Continuous - All Year Round*

The National Management Committee shall, at least once a year, invite representation from the National Youth / Involvement Fora to attend a meeting of the National Management Committee and partake in youth centred discussions at the meeting. The representatives of the National Youth / Involvement Fora shall have the right to attend and make submissions and nominations to the National Management Committee at any stage during the year.