**TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL UNIT**

Your Group has an established Joey Unit? Great!

Joeys are enthusiastic, curious and lively. They are exploring their world and you have a brilliant opportunity to help them learn a lot outside their normal environments of school and home.

They are also a valuable part of your Scout Group. We also know that Joey Scouts are more likely to follow the Scouting pathway through Cubs, Scouts, Venturers and on to Rovers!

But maintaining a successful and vibrant Joey Unit can be challenging, so Scouts have spoken to a number of experienced Joey Leaders to get their top tips for operating a successful Joey Unit.

1. It will take time.

Establishing a successful Unit will take time and that can be frustrating. Don’t be afraid of starting small and building slowly. Soon your Joeys will be bringing friends from school to join in the fun and a Bring a Friend program sure does help! When you run the Bring a Friend Program ensure your program is engaging and fun. These can be really successful when done well.

1. Always start with an active game.

Starting the program with an active game is a great idea. Not only does it burn off some of that excited energy, but can help with concentration and socialisation.

Active games can play a large part in the program of the Unit for a long time. That’s ok! Once the Joeys get familiar with you and each other, you will be able to start implementing more Scout method and program content. Talk to your Program Support Team or Program Mentor if you are looking for ideas to run a more engaging Joey night program. The program aims to be Youth Lead, Adult Supported, so the youth should be helping provide the activity ideas. By running their games and activities they feel more engaged in what is happening in their unit.

1. Make sure you change activities regularly and have back up activities.

Sometimes, no matter how good an activity it is, it just doesn’t land. Change it up. Have back up activities. That way, when something doesn’t work, or when attention spans aren’t cooperating, you have a few tricks up your sleeve!

1. You will need to repeat yourself – a lot!

Joeys are so excited about life and as such will need you to repeat instructions so they know what they are to do. Sometimes they might not be listening but often they will just need to hear things a few times to know what they are meant to do. It may also help to give the instructions a couple of different ways like verbally giving instruction while performing an example (visually) of what you want them to do.

1. Adventure, not Craft!

Opportunities to be creative are wonderful and important for Joeys but craft isn’t for everyone. Craft should be kept to a minimum and can fall under the Creative program area, but remember to also regularly cover the other areas such as Outdoor, Personal Growth and Community as well. If the program lends itself particularly well to it – go for it! But don’t be including craft just to fill the time. There are so many other things that contribute to a great Joey program!

1. Activities may take longer than you anticipate.

So, you’ve got your program set, lots of activities to keep the Joeys engaged and having fun. Great! But Joey Leaders can occasionally find themselves dropping activities from the program because an activity is either going really well or is taking longer than expected. That’s ok. As long as it is holding the interest of the Joeys and it is still useful to the program.

Most of all…

Be Flexible but be prepared!

The best thing to help you and your Joey Unit is to be flexible and be prepared. Go with the flow but also be ready to stop an activity.

Relax, enjoy and have fun!