

**Narragansett Council, BSA**  
**November 2020 Scouts BSA Breakout Talking Points**

***Youth Led Troop / Patrol Method***

- Some quotes from Robert S.S. Baden-Powell regarding Scouting and youth leadership:
  - “Scouting is a game for boys under the leadership of boys under the direction of a man.”
  - “An invaluable step in character training is to put responsibility on the individual.”
  - “The more responsibility the Scoutmaster gives his patrol leaders, the more they will respond.”
  - “The object of the patrol method is not so much saving the Scoutmaster trouble as to give responsibility to the boy.”
  - “In Scouting, a boy is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed.”
- Successful use of the patrol method and youth led troop achieves two of the four aims of Scouting
  - Citizenship training
  - Leadership development
- Benefits of a fully functioning patrol method:
  - If patrols are working well, the patrol leaders are probably being good leaders.
  - If the patrol leaders are being good leaders, the PLC should be working well so the youth are leading the program.
  - If the PLC is working well, they should be developing an exciting program that is keeping the Scouts interested in Scouting.
- The *Patrol Leader Handbook* was developed to guide Scouts in understanding and performing their role as the leaders of their patrols, and in the proper implementation of the patrol method.
- With a show of hands, virtual raised hand is sufficient. [*Can also set this as a poll*]
  - How many of you make certain that every patrol leader in your troop has and reads the *Patrol Leader Handbook*?
  - Do you go through the handbook with the patrol leaders so they can ask the SPL and SM questions?
    - This should be the minimum training for a new patrol leader.
- Solicit audience participation: “What does the ‘patrol method’ mean to you?”
- Questions to illustrate the patrol method:
  - Does each patrol have a yell, flag, etc., to cement its separate existence?
  - Do the patrols work as teams to solve problems, to plan part of an upcoming outing, or to come up with ideas for future outings?

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- How does your troop handle elections for new patrol leaders? Who elects the patrol leaders—just the patrol, the whole troop?
- Do your patrols stay together year after year, too build on their camaraderie and esprit de corps, or are they reshuffled every so often?
- If they're reshuffled, by whom?
- Do individual patrols conduct activities and meetings independent of troop activities? (Anyone want to share examples?)
- Some questions about how your unit use the patrol method in troop meetings:
  - Are Scouts directed to "ask your patrol leader" when they want to know the meeting agenda or about an upcoming outing?
  - Is there time in every meeting for patrol meeting time?
  - Do most troop meetings include games or skills contests that involve the patrols working as teams against the other patrols?
  - Is there any sort of patrol-base attendance contest, awarding weekly points for having the patrol flag present, for the number of Scouts present, and for the number of Scouts in uniform and with their handbooks?
- Some questions about how your unit use the patrol method during outings:
  - Do the Scouts cook as patrols, only for the youth in their patrol and not the whole troop?
  - Do you have different menus for each patrol, selected and planned by the Scouts in the patrol?
  - Do the Scouts tent only with others from their patrol, not with whomever they want?
  - Does the patrol leader set the duty roster for just the members of that patrol, and does everyone participate equally?
  - Does your troop have skills contests or games that involve competition between the patrols when on campouts?
  - How often does your troop have patrol cooking contests?
  - Do your campfires have skits or songs, etc., conducted by patrols, not individuals?
- When a Scoutmaster realizes it is not their job to run the troop, but to train youth leaders to run THEIR TROOP, they will be relieving themselves of much trivial work and reduce demands on their own time.
  - As Baden-Powell succinctly put it "Scoutmasters deal with the individual boy rather than the mass."
- If the patrol method is the building blocks for a youth-led troop, development of youth leaders is the glue that holds it together. We'll watch a short video that national put together on developing high performance youth leaders.

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- [Link to download video <https://vimeo.com/460155111>. I would suggest downloading the video and running it from a local source instead of trying to stream it.]
- *Can continue with the discussion questions at the end of the video as time allows.*