

LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

**PART VI
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**SECTION 5- BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
PROGRAMS
IN
PUBLIC HOUSING**

HOUSING AND HOME FINANCE AGENCY
PUBLIC HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

An up-to-date list of all Local Housing Authority Management Handbook Sections is provided in Low-Rent Housing Manual Section 100.2, Supplement 1, Exhibit 7.

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC HOUSING

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BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC HOUSING

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Section is to encourage and assist Local Authority personnel to cooperate with local Boy Scout organizations (called Districts and Councils) in initiating and expanding Scout programs and, when possible, in furnishing space and facilities for meetings of Scouting units. This is part of PHA's interest in helping Local Authorities develop close working relationships with all youth-serving organizations.

To boys in a public housing neighborhood, Scouting can mean an introduction to physical fitness and team play; and to a channeling of energies and a wholesome letting off of steam in recreation and camping, in work, and in developing skills and participating in sports. Indeed, the Scouting program may effect considerable reduction in maintenance costs caused by vandalism.

Tenants who become involved in Scouting leadership become better parents and neighbors and thus help to create a better community.

A statement by PHA Commissioner Marie C. McGuire on the PHA-Boy Scouts program of cooperation is attached as Exhibit 1. This cooperative program to provide boys with new horizons, new opportunities, and constructive leadership may well become an important item in the continuing war on poverty.

2. SCOUTING UNITS

a. Cub Scouting

Through a home and neighborhood-centered program of activities appealing to the 8 through 10 year-old boy, Cub Scouting teaches attitudes and habits that make him a better member of his family and community. Weekly den meetings are led by a Den Mother and a Den Chief. Monthly, all the boys and their parents meet as a pack under the direction of a Cubmaster.

b. Boy Scouting

Hiking and camping have great appeal to 11 through 13 year-old boys. No less important in Boy Scout training are the good turns, individual study in specialized merit badge fields, and learning to get along as they work together under boy leaders in their patrols. Boys learn both to follow and to lead under a qualified Scoutmaster.

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c. Exploring

Beginning at age 14, a boy may choose to participate in exploring, which offers a program geared to the needs of the young man who must soon take his place in adult society. He is offered experiences in social, vocational, outdoor, personal fitness, service, and citizenship areas. Adult consultants supplement regular leaders in making a more varied program possible.

3. HOW TO START THE PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- a. The Executive Director of the Local Authority should become acquainted with local Boy Scout council officials.
- b. Together they should (1) assess the present status of Scouting among boys in various projects and adjacent neighborhoods; (2) determine facts about eligible boys and available meeting facilities in each project area; (3) acquaint the Local Authority Commissioners with the program and secure their informal approval; and (4) arrange for a discussion on Scouting at a meeting of Housing Managers.
- c. In cooperation with the Housing Manager, they should lay careful plans to involve boys and adults in Scouting units in the immediate neighborhood or organize new units within the project.
- d. Each Housing Manager should bring together selected parents, interested elderly persons, adult Scout leaders, and selected members of his management and maintenance staff to review the Scouting program. Those present should indicate their abilities, talents, and interest in serving youth. This group can then be utilized to canvass other tenants and families in the neighborhood for additional information and assistance.
- e. If a tenant council or tenant committee exists, this group may be tied into the initial plans; otherwise such a group of residents may be organized. Frequently, the formation of a group of parents for the purpose of sponsoring Scouting units results in creating a strong tenant council where none had existed.
- f. The organizational group may be supplemented with adults from outside the project. These may be merchants, professional men, teachers, college students, social service workers, labor union officials, and others who work or live in the neighborhood. Since such people have relatively permanent jobs or residence in the area, they may give continuing help for years to come.
- g. If the community has an anti-poverty organization, arrangements may be made to enlist VISTA volunteers, work-study enrollees, neighborhood workers, or other

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persons paid from anti-poverty funds to help in the Scouting program. An effort should be made to explore other possible sources of local funds in order to help pay expenses.

- h. The involvement of parents in each Scouting unit should be stressed, since parents are an excellent source of leaders. The loss of adult leadership is a major problem because of the domestic crises that may occur in the lives of low-income families, as well as the normal turnover of residents in low-rent housing. If a Scouting unit should fail and disband, the disappointment experienced by the members may have an adverse effect upon their attitude toward other character-building organizations and activities.
- i. Interested and capable management, maintenance, and custodial employees should be urged to serve as volunteer Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, Assistant Scoutmasters, Explorer Advisors, Den Mothers, Merit Badge Counselors, or Committeemen. The involvement of the permanent Local Authority employees in leadership and standby capacities will help guarantee continuing leadership and successful programs for the Scouting units by providing personnel who can act in the absence of parents or other volunteers.
- j. The standard organization procedures as outlined in Scouting literature, including the prescribed steps for securing a unit leader, should be followed. Changes in the sequence of steps may be desirable, but the establishment of a strong Scouting unit to serve boys in public housing has no short cuts.
- k. Leadership training is available from the Boy Scout organization. Usually this consists of a 12-hour course given two hours a week, evenings or weekends, for six weeks. It may be conducted at the housing project; or, if desired, it may be given in a weekend camping trip and then followed by workshops. Boy Scout leaders do not need to be executives or businessmen. The leadership courses and training provided by the local Scout council are adapted to fit almost any willing worker.

4. SPONSORSHIP

An enthusiastic organization sponsor should be secured. This may be a tenant council or committee, or any of a number of types of organizations--church, school, PTA, civic or service group, college or fraternal group, settlement house, labor union, industrial plant, or the project management staff. In some cases, and especially in the initial stages, the Local Authority itself may be the organization sponsor. The sponsor should name a key man as institutional representative who will become a member of the local Boy Scout district committee and the local Boy Scout council and thus have a voice in the formulation of local Scouting policies and activities.

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5. INVOLVEMENT OF ELDERLY PERSONS

- a. Many elderly persons are in good health and have large blocks of leisure time and many valuable talents. Most would like to feel wanted and to face the challenge of a job or some other social responsibility. Scouting can give them a worthwhile activity, help overcome the feeling of loneliness, and offer them an opportunity to work with young people or with other adults. Such activity can give them an important role in helping to shape young citizens.
- b. Scouting stresses the "good turn" and community service. Scouts can visit the elderly and shut-ins and cheer them up, run errands, and assist in senior citizens programs.
- c. Elderly men can serve as assistant leaders; committeemen; members of Boards of Review; consultants on hobbies, special program features, and vocations; Den Dads; and neighborhood commissioners.
- d. Elderly women can assist Den Mothers; serve as handicraft instructors; work with a Women's Auxiliary; repair uniforms and make equipment; and earn funds for Scouting units through bake sales, suppers, and special senior citizens' activities.
- e. Many elderly persons have skills and hobbies that qualify them as Merit Badge Counselors in any of over 100 different subjects. Others can serve as judges, secretaries, treasurers, transportation aides, or in many other meaningful functions.
- f. A senior citizens group might sponsor a Cub Pack, a Boy Scout Troop, or an Explorer Unit.

6. SPACE FOR BOY SCOUT USE

- a. Steps should be taken to provide satisfactory space for Scout activities. Where the extent of Scouting activities warrants it, the Local Authority, after considering the needs of all tenant activity programs in relation to available space, may make space available exclusively for Scouting use during specific intervals or on a full-time basis. In some cases it may be feasible to utilize storage or basement space. With prior PHA approval, a tent or log cabin may be erected on the project site.
- b. Where the exclusive use of space is not possible, proper scheduling of activities in a community building may provide satisfactory space for Scouting activities. The management office conference room might be used after office hours or a

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portion of the maintenance space may be utilized. Careful attention should be given to providing adequate locked storage space for Scout equipment and belongings. When a new community building is designed, consultation with Scout officials in planning for its use and for inclusion of a storage closet exclusively for Scout use is recommended.

- c. Sometimes indoor and outdoor spaces for Scout use can be obtained from the recreation department, schools, churches, labor unions, or other organizations in the neighborhood.

7. LEGAL LIABILITY

- a. The owners', landlords', and tenants' public liability insurance carried by Local Authorities is comprehensive in form and will cover any legal liability of the Local Authority for injury, loss, or damage arising from Scouting activities on the premises.
- b. Similarly, the standard fire and extended coverage insurance policy carried by Local Authorities covers not only the property of the named insured (the Local Authority) but also any property for which the insured is legally responsible.
- c. Generally the local Boy Scout council carries comprehensive bodily injury and property damage liability insurance. In December 1964 the Boy Scout National Executive Board made available and recommended to local councils a Scout Blanket Liability and Automobile Policy based on a per member rate, which would provide coverage for all operations, insuring the interests of sponsors, all volunteer leaders, and chartered institutions, as well as the local council itself, its officers, members, and employees.

8. EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

a. New Haven

The organization and operation of a Boy Scout troop in Farnum Courts by the Alpha Phi Omega Fraternity of Yale University is described in an article, "The Odds Were Against Us," in March 1963 issue of Scouting Magazine. The sponsors used a flexible approach, but gave the boys up-to-standard Scouting. (See Exhibit 2).

b. Los Angeles

At Nickerson Gardens, an extensive Scouting program is sponsored by the Central Committee, a tenant organization that coordinates all the youth activities in the

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project, including Boy Scouting, Girl Scouting, and the Little League. The 1800-unit project is divided into five areas to provide smaller working units. Each boy joins the Scouting unit serving his area. (See Exhibit 3).

c. Chicago

The Executive Director of the Chicago Housing Authority stated in mid-1962:

"A couple of months ago, this particular Chicago 'landlord' got an idea that it might be helpful to have a few Boy Scouts around (among his 100,000 public housing tenants.)

"Believe me, Scouts are the greatest landlord-helpers that ever happened. Boys in the Chicago Housing Authority are now enlisted by the score (our immediate goal is 100 troops.)

"Scouts honor, I don't think anything nicer could happen to our town."

9. COSTS OF SCOUTING

- a. Scouting entails some group and individual expenses. For example, the New Haven troop cited above budgeted the following items for each Scout: registration 50 cents, neckerchief 50 cents, shirt \$3.50, handbook \$1.00, Boys' Life \$1.50, insignia 50 cents.
- b. Meeting expenses may require ingenuity and teamwork. The boys should be encouraged to earn their own money for these expenses. However, every local Scout council has effective suggestions for helping the boys and Scouting units when the going is rough; for example:
 - (1) A mothers' or parents' group may conduct money raising projects, such as rummage sales.
 - (2) Scouting regulations provide that Scouts may engage in money-raising projects under careful supervision. Units must actually earn their money by providing an actual service or value, and all such projects must be approved by the district finance committee.
 - (3) Camping gear may be improvised; as an example, tin cans and aluminum foil may be used for cooking.

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- (4) The local Scout council may arrange with local businesses, service clubs, and other organizations to obtain donations for equipment and camperships.
- (5) Goodwill Industries and other nonprofit organization thrift shops may provide used uniforms and equipment at low cost.

10. HELP AVAILABLE FROM THE BOY SCOUT COUNCIL

- a. The local council service center will furnish a variety of literature; also advice and assistance with organization techniques and training programs. Every Scouting unit can be provided with direct neighborhood commissioner service in order to train the leader and furnish him with program aids. The council also may provide access to weekend and summer camps and invite participation in various district and council events (such as Scout circuses, jamborees, Philmont expedition, etc.).
- b. The National Boy Scout Council also provides literature and many services through its various divisions and technical resources. For example, it has an extensive film library, including two new film strips with sound recordings, "Password to the Future - Scouting," prepared by the Chicago Housing Authority and the Chicago Boy Scout Council; and "What Road Will He Take?," depicting Scouting in the inner city. A 22-minute, 16-mm sound movie relating the story of Scouting in New Haven, entitled "The Odds Were Against Us," is also available.

A statement by The Honorable MARIE C. McGUIRE

Joint efforts to expand Scouting for youth in public housing neighborhoods have been and will continue to be a major concern of the Public Housing Administration.

Thousands of boys of Scouting age are now living in more than one-half million federally aided low-rent public housing dwellings in large and small communities throughout the nation.

The provision of decent, safe, and sanitary public housing for low-income families is an important resource in youth development. This may include indoor and outdoor facilities for constructive activities, thus furnishing community agencies like the Boy Scouts with a convenient, safe, and appropriate place in which to work with those they are pledged to serve.

Local housing authorities work toward creating and maintaining wholesome environments and cooperating with the Boy Scouts and other youth organizations in the development of positive programs and services for the almost half a million families they serve.

To boys in public housing neighborhoods, Scouting can mean an introduction to physical fitness and team play; and to a channeling of energies and a wholesome letting off of steam in recreation, in work, and in developing skills and participating in sports. Indeed, the Scouting program can effect considerable reductions in maintenance costs due to vandalism.

Together, the Boy Scouts and local housing authorities can offer bold new custom-tailored youth opportunities to boys who are hard to reach. Through youth and adult activities, Scouting can make significant contributions to the almost half-million low-income families now living in public housing projects.

*Marie C. McGuire
Commissioner
Public Housing Administration*



*BEFORE Troop 105's first hike at end of three weeks,
Scouts are briefed at housing-development office.*

THE ODDS WERE AGAINST US

By RICHARD B. COUSER

*President, Alpha Phi Omega, Yale University,
Chairman, Troop 105, Quinnipiac Council*

AN OUTSIDER NEVER WOULD HAVE BET on the success of Troop 105, and at times some of us on the inside would have placed only small wagers. However, the troop was started because of—not in spite of—the odds against it.

Boys desperately needed Scouting in Farnam Courts, a low-income housing development in the inner-city area of New Haven, Conn. Predominantly Negro, Italian, and Puerto Rican, they faced many frustrations common to such areas—racial and ethnic tensions, large families struggling along on small incomes, language barriers, educational difficulties, inadequate recreation facilities, and lack of community spirit. In addition, they were in

the turbulence of urban renewal and superhighway projects.

But the boys soon had several things going for them besides the incentive of their urgent need. In meeting it the initiative came from the Neighborhood Improvement Project of the Community Council of Greater New Haven. NIP, as it is called, sought to bring family counseling, recreation, and other social services to Farnam Courts residents through existing organizations.

NIP's dedicated Youth Director Tom Flood believed that Scouting could do much to help the boys help themselves. Working with the Quinnipiac Council, he made an intensive search for leadership within the area. None of

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AFTER six months, a uniformed troop opens its first court of honor with an impressive flag ceremony.

Farnam Courts residents had leadership experience. They were so bogged down with the daily life struggle—such as more than one job—that they didn't join in anything.

Flexible but standard

Resigned to outside leadership, at least for a time, Flood was referred by Yale University to Alpha Phi Omega. This national service fraternity of Scouts and former Scouts on campus could be a constant source of experienced leaders with new men entering the chapter each year. The chapter received Flood enthusiastically, and a dozen men sat down with him and council representatives to plan the launching of Troop 105. They resolved to be flexible in their approach, but to give the boys up-to-standard Scouting.

The 43 eligible boys in Farnam Courts were invited to the first troop meeting in a basement room of the housing development. Half of them turned out, most of them openly scornful of being Boy Scouts. A stirring description of the fun and adventure awaiting them captured their city-stifled imaginations. Rugged competitive games sent them home with a changed outlook on Scouting.

Succeeding weeks brought them back with more and more of their friends until almost every eligible boy belonged to Troop 105. A prime factor in this growth was an early start on outdoor adventure. The first hike came within three weeks, followed by at least one outing a month.

Initial patrol organization did not follow the natural boy-gang pattern that would have created separate Puerto Rican, Negro, and Italian groups and avoided solution of several related problems. The boys were assigned to patrols with a calculated distribution of potential leaders and potential troublemakers. Until boy leadership could be developed, an assistant Scoutmaster was assigned to guide each patrol.

More than a dozen Alpha Phi Omegas serve as Scoutmaster, assistants, and committeemen. An unusual amount of adult help was necessary to give individual training in Scouting skills and understanding of the rules of the Scouting game. Because of language differences or inadequate schooling, some boys could not read the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Where interpretation was needed, a Spanish-speaking leader worked with Puerto Rican boys outside troop meetings.

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The Scout Oath and Law were printed on large placards and prominently displayed. In early meetings much time was spent helping boys individually to understand these ideals in terms of their daily lives. Thus we devised methods to meet the group's special problems as they arose.

Two things at the outset were considered essential for Troop 105's success—uniforms and a full outdoor program. Uniforms and camping equipment cost money, and that was one thing that neither our Scouts nor their families nor the sponsor had to spare. For each Scout we budgeted these items:

Registration 50 cents, neckerchief 50 cents, shirt \$3.50, handbook \$1.00, Boys' LIFE \$1.50, insignia 50 cents. That totals \$7.50, without a complete uniform, camping gear, and summer camp fee.

Conventional financial support from parents or neighborhood projects was unavailable to this troop, at least in the beginning. We set up a general treasury for both group and individual expenses and built it up by an extensive sale of ball-point pens in more prosperous areas of the city. This and other money-earning projects were carefully organized and carried out under close supervision.

All Scouts were required to participate in the earning in order to share in the treasury. This procedure proved an overwhelming success, financially and otherwise. The boys learned to work for a common cause. One with a long record of thefts proved he could handle money honestly.

Appearance counts

A used-uniform collection on the Yale campus, begun before spring recess and ending after it, provided a stock of uniforms. Boys earned these uniforms at a nominal cost when they became Tenderfoot Scouts. Two silk-screen artists produced a special troop neckerchief at cost. A congressman donated an American flag that had flown over the national capitol. Within a few months a well-outfitted troop began to emerge.

Camping equipment required flexibility and ingenuity. Most of the cooking was done in tin cans or aluminum foil. Army ponchos costing \$1.00 apiece were buttoned together and pitched as tents. Horseshoe packs lashed with binder twine were used instead of store-bought packs. Our strong camping program began with a minimum cost for gear.

Scouting has proved one of the first institutions that has achieved a completely accepted ethnic integration. Tangible evidence was a gift from the Tenants Council of the housing development of \$240 that had lain untouched for two years because of disagreement over its use. Troop 105 was the first venture that won unanimous approval of the member groups. The troop also inspired mothers to run a rummage sale that netted another \$30.00.

With the first court of honor the patrol leaders' council insisted on having a family spaghetti supper—despite some hesitancy on the part of adult leaders. Fully half of the parents attended, and many mothers shared in the preparations. Older teen-agers waited on tables. What

FAMILY interest in Scouting is shown by participation in spaghetti supper held after court of honor.



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began as a dubious project turned into a full-scale neighborhood endeavor.

When an Easter egg hunt was held for youngsters in the housing project, uniformed Scouts served as guides to keep spectators within bounds. Their authority was respected by adults and older boys and girls.

Results are showing

Troop 105, a little over a year old, lacks the full test of time, but the impact of Scouting on the lives of these boys and upon their neighborhood is already visible. The greatest thrill is the response of the boys themselves. All have learned a new code of conduct that puts deep meaning into their lives. Several of them spontaneously coached other boys for an hour a day on the Tenderfoot requirements. For the first time in their lives more than one handled money honestly, and also for the first time

some gained recognition for a positive accomplishment.

Underlying all this is a small but perceptible change in the attitude of these youngsters toward education and the goals a man should have in his life. Scouting is succeeding in its most vital aspiration—moulding responsible citizens.

The program is catching the community's imagination. A good deal of inventiveness and flexibility in the normal approaches of Scouting were required to make it a reality in this area. But the principles and fundamentals are the same for these boys as for all boys. Any boy can be attracted to Scouting; he needs only the right approach. Scouting can work and work well in a less-privileged community of the inner-city area. Just ask the people in Farnam Courts.

To aid in working with housing development authorities, an information leaflet is available: Are There Boys or Boy Scouts in Your Housing Development?, No. 3035.

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Reaching Boys in Public Housing Projects

BISHOP Towers," "Oakdale Gardens," "San Felipe Courts," "Nickerson Gardens," "Clayton Homes" — these and thousands of others with names commemorating some local personage or locale constitute the growing public housing projects one finds in America's cities, small and large alike. Millions of Americans have found in them the comfort and security of home. Over a half million of these Americans are boys of Scouting ages (8 through 16).

Thanks to the determination of Scouters across America and the fine cooperation and encouragement of public housing project managers, many such projects have a high-quality program of Scouting in operation. Let's look at just one of many that could be cited.

In Los Angeles, Nickerson Gardens is a project providing homes for 1,800 families of varied composition. U. S. Griggs, manager of Nickerson Gardens, has a deep conviction that projects such as his must provide much more than just a shelter for the families that live there, a philosophy shared by most project managers. At Nickerson Gardens considerable attention has been given to the development of community activities to attract tenant participation for practically all age groups.

The Scouting program is one of several such activities that have been given enthusiastic endorsement and active guidance by the management. Today there are four Cub Scout packs and three Boy Scout troops in operation — serving approximately three hundred boys. Exploring will soon be added.

At the outset of the organization of Scouting in Nickerson Gardens, it was Mr. Griggs's suggestion that the sponsorship of Scouting should rest with a group of citizens known as a central committee — a tenant organization that serves as a coordinating body for all the youth activities in the project, such as Girl Scouting, Boy Scouting, Little League, and others. This has proved to be a wise decision.

The chairman of each Scouting unit committee is a member of this central committee that meets once each month for a review of the several youth-serving activities in the development. At this time the committee hears reports from the individual Scouting unit chairmen.

Because of the size of Nickerson Gardens, the

entire project was divided into five areas in order to provide smaller working units and to give some direction to the distribution of membership to the several Cub Scout packs and Boy Scout troops. Volunteer personnel was recruited from each area to serve on unit committees and provide unit leadership. Under this area plan, the boy joins the Scouting unit serving his area.

Manager Griggs has emphasized that it is extremely important that the central committee be made up of an initial nucleus of carefully selected persons plus the individuals who are elected to the chairmanship of unit committees. It is desirable, too, since tenants in public housing projects are often somewhat transient, to bring into membership of the unit committees some outside persons to lend permanency and stability to the Scouting program.

Scouting at Nickerson Gardens is strictly a tenant activity and is not under the domination of the housing project manager. At the same time, however, the management is deeply concerned and interested in seeing that boys have opportunity to get a good program under the very best available leadership.

Mr. Griggs, in appraising the values of Scouting for the boys at Nickerson Gardens, points out that:

1. Vandalism has decreased 90 to 95 per cent and maintenance costs have decreased 40 to 45 per cent since Scouting became an active part of the project's program for youth.
2. The problem of slingshots is nonexistent now.
3. Scouts help around the project office, assist in keeping the grounds clean, and cut lawns to earn extra money.
4. Parents are more cooperative with management, and adults realize they have abilities and talents that they are more eager to use.
5. Over 60 adults are involved as unit committeemen, unit leaders, and Den Mothers. This has helped make better tenants throughout the project.

In the cities of America — wherever there are low-rental, public housing facilities — the need and the opportunity to serve boys who live in them is great. The success of Scouting in Nickerson Gardens can be duplicated in the public housing projects in your council.

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THE SCOUT EXECUTIVE

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