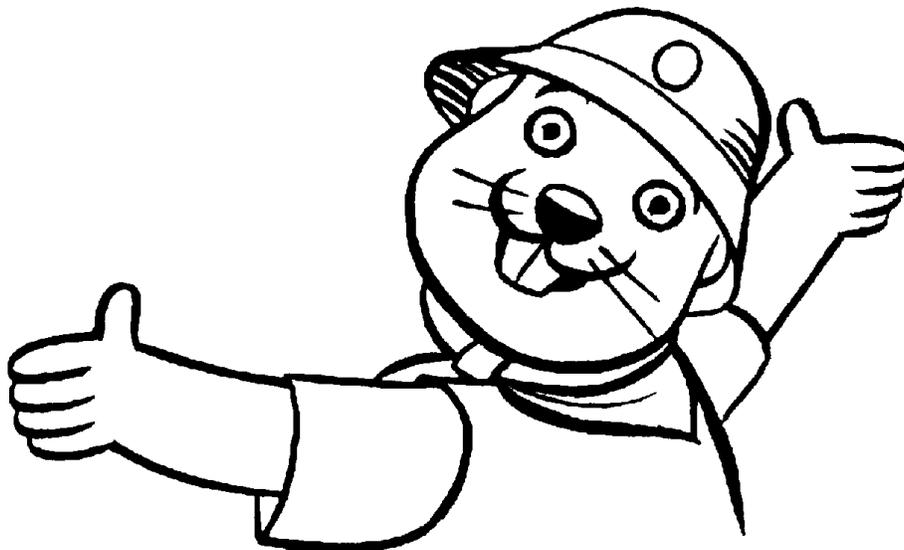


# BEAVER PARENTS' GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2005



## BEAVER PARENTS' GUIDE

Thank you for choosing the Scouts Canada's Beaver Program for your child. We are sure that you and your child will have lots of fun and excitement participating in our program conducted by carefully selected and trained leaders.

This guide provides background information about Scouting in general and more detailed information about the adventurous world of Beavers that your child is about to enter.

### ABOUT SCOUTING AND SCOUTS CANADA

Scouting, the largest youth organization in the world, has over 25 million members in some 216 countries.

Scouts Canada offers Scouting programs in Canada to over 94,000 young people, supported by 28,000 caring and dedicated volunteers. Scouts Canada offers seven fun and adventurous programs to young people, which include:

<b>Beavers:</b>	<b>5-7 years old</b>
<b>Wolf Cubs:</b>	<b>8-10 years old</b>
<b>Scouts:</b>	<b>11-14 years old</b>
<b>Venturers:</b>	<b>14-17 years old</b>
<b>Rovers:</b>	<b>18-26 years old</b>
<b>SCOUTSabout:</b>	<b>5-10 years old</b>
<b>Extreme Adventure:</b>	<b>14-18 years old</b>

Scouts Canada's **MISSION** applies to all of our programs:

"The mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society."

Scouting's Mission is achieved by:

- involving youth throughout their formative years in a non-formal educational process.
- using a specific method that makes each individual the principal agent in his or her development as a self-reliant, supportive, responsible and committed person.
- assisting youth to establish a value system based upon spiritual, social and personal principles as expressed in the Promise and Law.

Scouting is based on three broad **PRINCIPLES** which represent its fundamental beliefs:

**Duty to God:** This is defined as: "Adherence to spiritual principles, loyalty to the religion that expresses them and acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom."

**Duty to Others:** This is defined as: “loyalty to one’s country in harmony with the promotion of local, national and international peace, understanding and cooperation”, and, “participation in the development of society, with recognition and respect for the dignity of one’s fellow-being and for the integrity of the natural world.”

**Duty to Self:** This is defined as: “responsibility for the development of oneself.” This is in harmony with the educational purpose of the Scout Movement whose aim is to assist young people in the full development of their potentials.

## **BACKGROUND OF BEAVERS**

Beavers started in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and the program was approved by the National Council as a three year experiment in May, 1972. It became an overnight success prompting Scouts Canada to adopt it as an official program in 1974. Since that time, many other countries have modelled similar programs after our Beaver program. Thanks to Beavers and similar programs in other countries, youth throughout the world are able to join Scouting at a much earlier age.

The Beaver Program stems from the book **FRIENDS OF THE FOREST**, written specifically for Beavers. The book describes how the Jones family have come to live in the clearing along the river bank and how they quickly become aware of their new neighbours, a colony of beavers that also live along the river bank. The story illustrates how the beaver colony observes the Jones family, giving them names and then eventually how the beavers meet the members of the Jones family, mom, dad and their three children.

The story is the background resource which provides the terminology, setting, theme and program material for operating a Beaver Colony.

## **BECOMING A BEAVER**

Beavers is a program for children ages 5-7. Seven-year-old Beavers receive an introduction to the Wolf Cub program where they can continue their Scouting adventure.

A new member begins as a **KIT** and works to become an **EAGER BEAVER** (see investiture ceremony).

Parents, you can help your children learn the Beaver Law, Promise and Motto and even help them learn what to do at the opening and closing ceremonies. (Everything you need to help your young Beaver is included in this Parents Guide).

**Beaver Law:** A Beaver has fun, works hard and helps family and friends.

**Beaver Promise:** I promise to love God and to help take care of the world.

**Beaver Motto:** Sharing, Sharing, Sharing.

## PROGRAM

To meet the Mission and Principles of Scouts Canada in the Beaver program, the following **GOALS** guide activities that encourage Beavers to:

- find examples of God's love for them and the world;
- experience and express love and joy;
- express themselves;
- be healthy and have good feelings about themselves;
- develop a sense of belonging and sharing in small group activities;
- develop a sense of co-operation through non-competitive activities;
- appreciate nature.

In Beavers, the Mission, Principles and Goals are achieved through the use of a program of understanding, supportive fun. Activities are built around seven Program elements: Games, Crafts, Music, Storytelling, Playacting, Spiritual Fellowship and Outdoors.

## BEAVER TERMINOLOGY

When you visit your children's Beaver Colony or talk to them about Beavers, you will need to understand the "**Beaver lingo**". To help you out, we've listed some of the names typically assigned to the Leaders (taken from the characters in *Friends of the Forest*), and other terms used, along with an explanation of who or what is being referred to.

### Friends of the Forest Names used by Beaver Leaders:

- Bubbles** - the person having so much fun splashing her feet in the water  
**Hawkeye** - the tall person that first noticed the beavers in the pond  
**Rainbow** - the child who wore clothes of many colours  
**Rusty** - child whose hair was the colour of a red fox  
**Sunshine** - the person with sparkling eyes and whose smile made people feel warm and good inside  
**Tic Tac** - the squirrel

### Other terms frequently used:

**Beaver Hand Signal** –Leader's arm straight up with hand forming Beaver salute. This signals Beavers to stop everything they are doing and pay attention to the leader.

**Beaver Salute** - Special sign of greeting, made with bent fingers. It represents the two front teeth of a beaver.

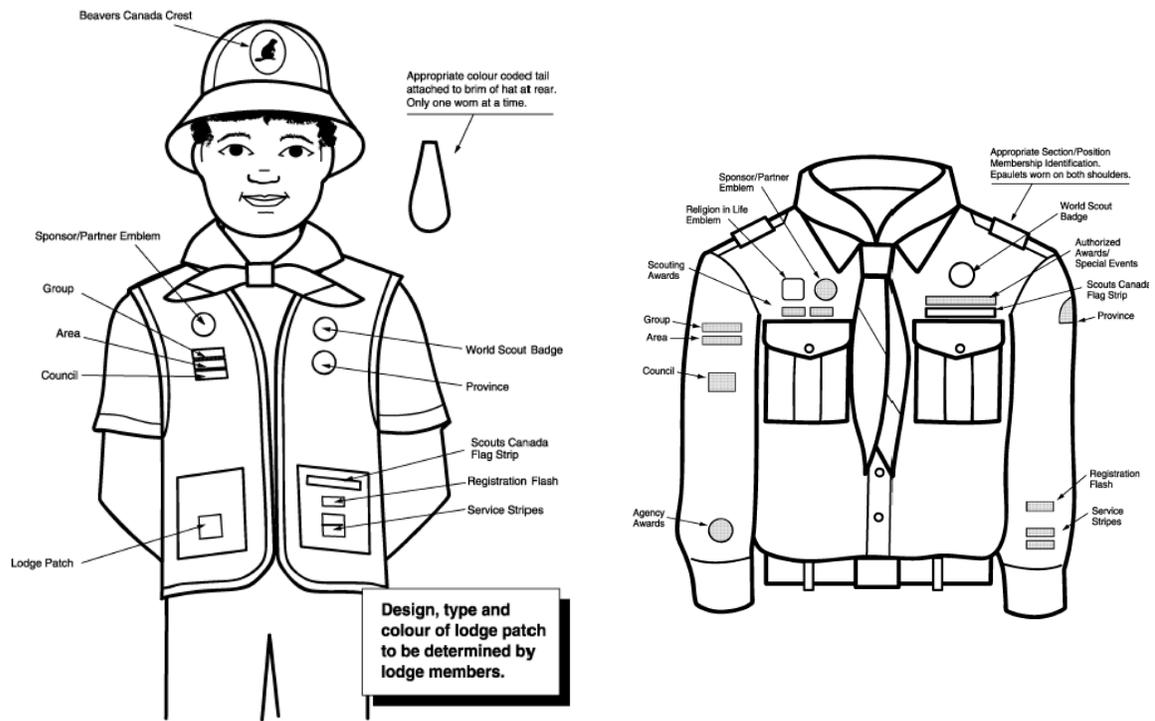
**Beaver Position** - Seated cross-legged on the floor.



- Big Brown Beaver** - A large toy Beaver mascot used in ceremonies.
- Busy Beavers** - Seven year old Beavers who are getting ready to swim up to Wolf Cubs.
- Chopping Position** - Squatting down with elbows on knees, and both hands making a Beaver salute. (Used in the opening and closing ceremonies)
- Colony** - The entire group of Beavers and leaders.
- Dam Formation** - Circle formation used for organizing Beavers.
- Eager Beaver** - A Kit who has learned the Promise, Law and Salute and the opening, closing and investiture ceremonies.
- Feeding The Beaver**- The act of collecting dues (money children contribute weekly for supplies or special activities).
- Grand Tail Slap** - Sit cross-legged on the floor, raise the right hand above the head and bring it down to slap the floor in front of you.
- Investiture** - The ceremony in which a KIT is invested (receives the Beaver neckerchief) and becomes an Eager Beaver.
- Keeo** - Keeo is a Wolf Cub who works in a Colony to serve as a link between the Beaver and Wolf Cub sections and to strengthen communications between Beavers and the adult leadership team. Keeo is also a member of the Beaver colony leadership team.
- Kit** - In nature, a growing beaver. In the program, a Beaver who has not yet been invested.
- Lodge** - Lodges are smaller working groups of five or six Beavers and a leader. Lodges are useful for some activities like crafts and discussions, or, at times during the meeting when Beavers would benefit from more individual attention.
- Lodge Patch** - Beavers usually decide upon a name and symbol for their lodge and attach their symbol (lodge patch) to the right hand pocket of their uniform as a sign of identification and belonging.
- Lodging** - The name of the closing ceremony which occurs at the end of each meeting.

- Pond -** The place where a Beaver Colony meets: i.e. , a church, school, community club, auditorium, etc.
- River Banks -** A formation used to organize Beavers quietly. Beavers stand side by side in two wavy lines that are about three feet apart.
- Swimming-Up -** The ceremony in which the oldest Beavers are transferred to the Wolf Cub program. A Beaver goes to Cubs when he/she is between 7 1/2 and 8 years old.
- Tail Celebration -** The meeting, usually held in the Fall, at which the Colony recognizes that all Beavers have grown older. The children receive a new colour coded tail to symbolize their growth. The tail is then sewn onto the back of their Beaver hat for all to see.
- Tail Groups -** A very useful sub-grouping system which is used to create smaller working groups within the Colony. Tail groups are indicated by Beavers wearing different colours of tails on their hats. Typically, they are the same age: 5 year olds (Brown Tail), 6 year olds (Blue Tail) and 7 year olds (White Tail) form the three different tail groups. This type of grouping is very practical at different points in the program. It allows leaders to give older Beavers a different or more challenging activity than younger or newer Beavers.
- Tail Magic Light Symbol -** The magic light symbol is a silver streak down the centre of the white tail. Seven year olds (Busy Beavers) may change from a White Tail to a White Tail with a “magic light” symbol a few months prior to swim-up to Wolf Cubs.
- Tail Slap -** The name of the opening ceremony which occurs at the beginning of each meeting. The action of clapping the hands behind the back.

## UNIFORM



**Beaver Uniform**

**Leader Uniform**

The official uniform for Beavers is:

- coby hat in blue and brown with Beavers Canada crest;
- brown vest with blue pockets, Beavers Canada strip on the top edge of the left pocket and coloured lodge patch on the right;
- blue neckerchief, or group neckerchief worn cross-over style, see diagram;
- neckerchief slide;
- group, district, regional, provincial, world and sponsor/partner emblems and service stripes.

The colours brown and blue symbolize nature; brown for the earth and the beaver's fur coat, and blue for the clear sky and fresh sparkling water. White is the colour of the moon and stars. They give us light to help us find our way through the darkness of the night and symbolize distant goals, seemingly far away but attainable.

Other items worn on the uniform are the registration flash, positioned below the Beavers Canada strip on the vest, and the Beaver tail, attached to the back of the hat.

Teach your Beaver to respect his/her uniform and wear it proudly. After your child is invested, encourage him/her to wear the full uniform.

These items, along with other related books and accessories are available at your local Scout Shop. Check your yellow pages for the Scout Shop nearest you.

## **CEREMONIES**

### **OPENING CEREMONY (TAIL SLAP)**

The opening Tail Slap is conducted by a leader at the beginning of every meeting. All other leaders and Keeto join the Beavers in the ceremony.

The Tail Slap gives Beavers an opportunity to let off steam in a controlled manner. They take it most seriously and enter into it with their whole heart and lungs. It's a way for them to express their joy in being alive and their enjoyment of being Beavers. It is also a tangible start to the meeting's activities.

All Kits and Eager Beavers take part in the opening ceremony. To start the ceremony, a leader stands in the middle of the pond next to Big Brown Beaver and calls, "River Banks." At this command, the Beavers form two wavy lines (river formation), one line on each side of the hall, and face inward, holding hands.

The leader then calls out, "Build the Dam." At this command, the Beavers go into dam formation by closing the ends of each bank to make a dam across the river which encloses Big Brown Beaver and the leader in the middle.



The leader stretches out his/her arms sideways and then lowers them. At this signal, Beavers take the chopping position: feet on floor and body in crouching position, with elbows touching knees, forearms straight up and both hands in Beaver Salute (position representing paws on tree trunks.)

When the Beavers are in the chopping position, the leader asks, "Who are you and what do you do?" As loudly as they can, the Beavers reply:

"Beavers, Beavers, Beavers,  
Sharing, Sharing, Sharing,"

Immediately after saying this in unison, the Beavers call, "Ooo-oo-OO!", starting quietly and building ever louder. At maximum volume, Beavers leap up to do a Tail Slap (clap hands behind back). They are imitating the swishing sound of the water as the beavers swim from the bottom of the pond to break the surface.

### **FEEDING THE BEAVER**

This ceremony accomplishes the collection of the Beavers' "dues" done at the beginning of each meeting. Beavers bring "food for the Beaver" (their dues) into the dam to feed Big Brown Beaver, by putting the "food" either into a slot in Big Brown Beaver or into a dish in front of him.

## **CLOSING CEREMONY (LODGING)**

A leader conducts this ceremony and all other leaders join the Beavers during the ceremony.

The ceremony marks the conclusion of every meeting and all Kits and Eager Beavers take part.

As in the opening ceremony, the closing ceremony begins with the leader standing in the centre of the hall next to Big Brown Beaver and calling out, “River Banks”, followed by “Build the Dam”, so that the Beavers end in dam formation.

The leader then calls out, “Lodge” and at this command, all slowly sink to the floor into the Beaver position (seated cross-legged). As the Beavers go down, they say the sleepy sound, “Sh, sh, sh, sh, sh, sh”, until all Beavers are sitting cross-legged on the floor. The leader then claps his/her hands once and all “sh-ing” ceases. Softly, Beavers call out, “*Sleeping, Sleeping, Sleeping.*”

The leader raises an arm above the head, and Beavers follow the action. With the palms of their hands, both leader and the Beavers make one resounding slap on the floor in front of themselves.

The leader calls out, “Good night and busy building tomorrow.”

The Beavers reply, “Good night, (name of the leader who is conducting the ceremony).”

## **INVESTITURE CEREMONY**

When a child joins Beavers, he/she is a Kit, the term used to describe a young Beaver. Kits are placed in a lodge when they attend their first Beaver meeting. They may wear the Beaver hat and vest right away, but not the neckerchief as it will be presented to them when they are invested.

To become an Eager Beaver, a Kit must know the Beaver Promise, Law, and Salute, and the opening, closing and investiture ceremonies.

Parents/Guardians are invited to participate in the investiture ceremony. They are asked to stand behind their child when the Beavers receive their neckerchief. This is an important event in the life of a Beaver—it’s even more special if the Beaver’s parents/guardians are present and included in the ceremony. If, for some reason, a parent/guardian or other member of the family is unable to attend, a leader will act as a fill-in.



## HOW SCOUTS CANADA SELECTS LEADERS

Scouts Canada knows the importance of selecting the right volunteer to lead activities for your children. That is why leaders undergo a detailed selection and training process. This process includes:

- an interview
  - personal reference checks
  - a Police Record Check
  - orientation
  - coaching and mentoring
  - ongoing evaluation
- } Completed Prior to working with Youth

### SAMPLE MEETING OUTLINE

A Beaver meeting is planned to include a variety of games, crafts, ceremonies, songs, stories, and fellowship all wrapped up in FUN. Sometimes Leaders will pick a theme and design the meeting around it. Here is a sample Beaver meeting outline, with a Beach theme.

#### Beaver Meeting Schedule: One Week

Time	Activity	Program Details	Leader Responsible
10 mins.	Gathering Activity	Beach Blanket Toss (See detail planning sheet)	
5 mins.	Opening Ceremony	(Details can be found in the Beaver Leader's Handbook)	
10 mins.	Game	Beach Ball Co-operative Game (See detail planning sheet)	
20 mins.	Theme Activity	Sun Hats and Headbands (See detail planning sheet)	
10 mins.	Song/Story	The Swimming Hole song (See detail planning sheet)	
10 mins.	Lodge Meeting	Discuss what Beavers need to bring to the beach, and the need for sun screen and hats.	
5 mins.	Spiritual Fellowship	- Recite Law - Prayer/talk	
5 mins.	Closing Ceremony	(Details can be found in the Beaver Leader's Handbook)	
15 mins.	Leader Discussion Time	Review meeting and discuss next week's plans.	
<b>Meeting Notes:</b>			

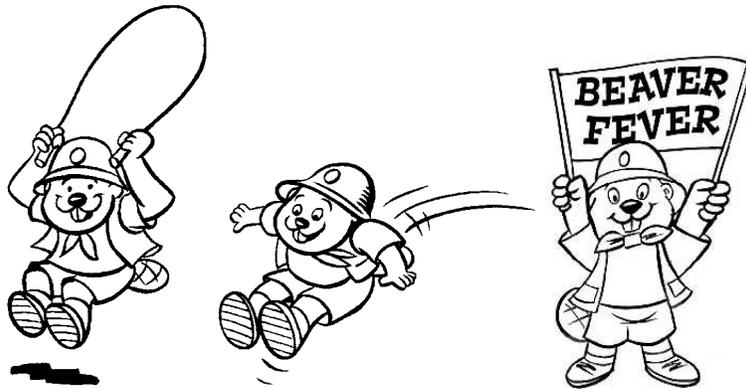
Parents can also help by ensuring that their child arrives properly prepared for the program and activities scheduled for the evening or outing.

**CLOTHING FOR MEETINGS** - Beavers should arrive at the meeting facility wearing their uniform and suitable footwear for running and playing (sneakers).

**PICK UP DROP OFF TIMES** - Please drop your Beaver off at the meeting hall no earlier than \_\_\_\_\_, and pick him/her up at \_\_\_\_\_. Parents cooperation with these rules is greatly appreciated. These rules will apply unless parents have been advised otherwise. Please bring your child right inside the meeting space to ensure that leaders are present before dropping your child off. When picking your child up, once again please come inside the meeting space so the leaders are able to release your child to you.

The **REGISTRATION FEE** that you have paid for your child to join is distributed between the group, and various Councils of Scouts Canada. This fee enables the various levels to develop program resources, provide training and support for the leaders, and provide insurance coverage for all registered members.

In addition, each week we collect **“DUES”** from each child. This money is used to provide craft materials/supplies and snacks for the children. From time to time, we will go on various outings and visits (at least once per month), and these may also require additional fees. We will advise parents of these opportunities well in advance through notices and/or monthly calendars.



**WE HOPE YOU AND YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE  
ADVENTUROUS WORLD OF BEAVERS!!!**