

Retention Best Practices for Troops

Problem: Low Number of Youth in a Troop

Solutions:

- 1- Work with another local Troop or adopt each other as ‘sister troops’, attending campouts and events together.
- 2- Reach out to chartering church promoting the program as a whole, with emphasis on younger youth.
- 3- Involve the current members in an Annual Planning session (see [Troop Fundraising 101](#)). This teamwork approach will always retain current members while word spreads of the dynamic program being offered.
- 4- Use [JoinTheTrail.com](#) resources to get the word out throughout the community.

Problem: Lack of Adult Leadership (“one-man show” or very few adults involved)

- 1- TML Team leaders are just “names on paper” to fulfill the requirement; there is no expectation to take on real responsibilities.
- 2- There is no *Charter Organization* involvement (Direct Contact Leaders “run” the Troop).
- 3- The Troop Committee is weak/uninvolved.
- 4- No succession plan exists; instead there is an ongoing “dictatorship”.

Solutions:

- 1 and 2- An active TML takes responsibility for selecting leaders best suited for each position.
- 3 and 4- Troops must have functioning and regularly-meeting Troop Committees with defined roles (such as Committee Chairman, Treasurer, Advancement Chair, “Onboarding” Facilitator, Membership Chair, Camping/Outdoor Activities Chair, Training Coordinator, etc). No Direct Contact Leaders (other than Troopmaster) should be on the Troop Committee!

Models of Successful Troops*

Finding solutions to problems are often found in best practices of successful Troops.

- 1- Launching a Troop takes time. Successful Troops seem to be the ones that took their time setting up before starting up.
- 2- Troops that participate in Area and state events are more successful than those that don’t.
- 3- Ministry alignment is in sync; the Troop has the ongoing support of their Charter Organization.
- 4- The TML is knowledgeable of/involved in the Troop.
- 5- The Troop has a large enough Charter Organization facility.
- 6- The Troop has experienced leadership; leaders take training and continue with refresher courses.
- 7- The Troop holds efficient and productive monthly Committee meetings.
- 8- The Troop follows a detailed calendar of events (and gets notice out well in advance).
- 9- The Troop is always encouraging youth leadership (with adults in the shadows).

10- The Charter Organization/Troop makes sure that their leaders stay aligned with Trail Life USA policies.

* Compiled by the TLUSA Regional Team Leaders (the Volunteers who oversee all Point Men—and, in turn, all of the Troops—across the nation).