

CUB SCOUTS WITH DISABILITIES

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INTRODUCTION

Scouting is based on principles that include duty to God and country, human dignity, the rights of individuals, and recognizing the obligation of all members to develop and use their potential. Cub Scouting is dedicated to bringing out the best in people, with the emphasis not on winning as an end result but on the far more demanding task of “doing one’s best.” A boy should not be compared with other boys in the pack but should be expected to do his best.

When looking at a Cub Scout, look at the whole boy:

- What are his *characteristics* (physical, emotional, developmental, spiritual, learning methods, interest areas, and strengths)?
- What are his *areas of opportunity*? Opportunities provide a chance for a boy to add new skills or build strengths. How can a boy’s areas of opportunity be turned into strengths?
- What are his *abilities*? How can his abilities be strengthened? We know that boys in this age group are in a continuous process of growing physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

By looking at each boy as an individual, we find that each boy has his own set of abilities. Boys with specifically identified special needs or specifically identified special considerations are no more nor less than boys with their own set of abilities. These boys, like all boys, have their own set of strengths, too.

Cub Scouts come with many different combinations of personalities and abilities, and each boy is a unique individual.

By combining this realization with the aims of Scouting—to encourage character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness in boys—we can provide a program for any boy. Through the Scouting program we can challenge each boy to develop and use his potential with support and guidance from other members and leaders.

Every boy in the den, and every den in the pack, is part of a cooperative group working together with shared responsibilities. This cooperative group, emphasizing individual leadership, makes Scouting work well for boys with different abilities. Children with and without identified disabilities benefit from working and cooperating together. Cooperative learning helps boys develop group skills, while shared responsibilities and a shared decision-making process promote leadership skills in all boys.

The motto of Cub Scouting is “Do Your Best,” which makes the program easily adaptable to every boy, regardless of identified disabilities. Your assignment as a leader is to help all Cub Scouts find success in *doing their best*.

FOUR CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

Disabilities may be defined in four broad categories:

1. **Learning disabilities** can affect understanding, listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing mathematical functions. An example of a learning disability would be attention deficit disorder (ADD). Remember, not all disabilities are visible.

