



CED 722

Supporting Mixed-Gender Scouting as a Commissioner

Course Objectives



At the end of this training, a commissioner will be able to:

- **Describe** the history of mixed-gender Scouting domestically and internationally
- **Recognize** the importance of inclusivity to the mission and success of Scouting America
- **Respond** to common concerns about mixed-gender Scouting and **share** facts that address those concerns

Commissioners' Role



What role do commissioners play in issues related to mixed-gender Scouting?



Mixed-Gender Scouting Activity

Small group breakout:

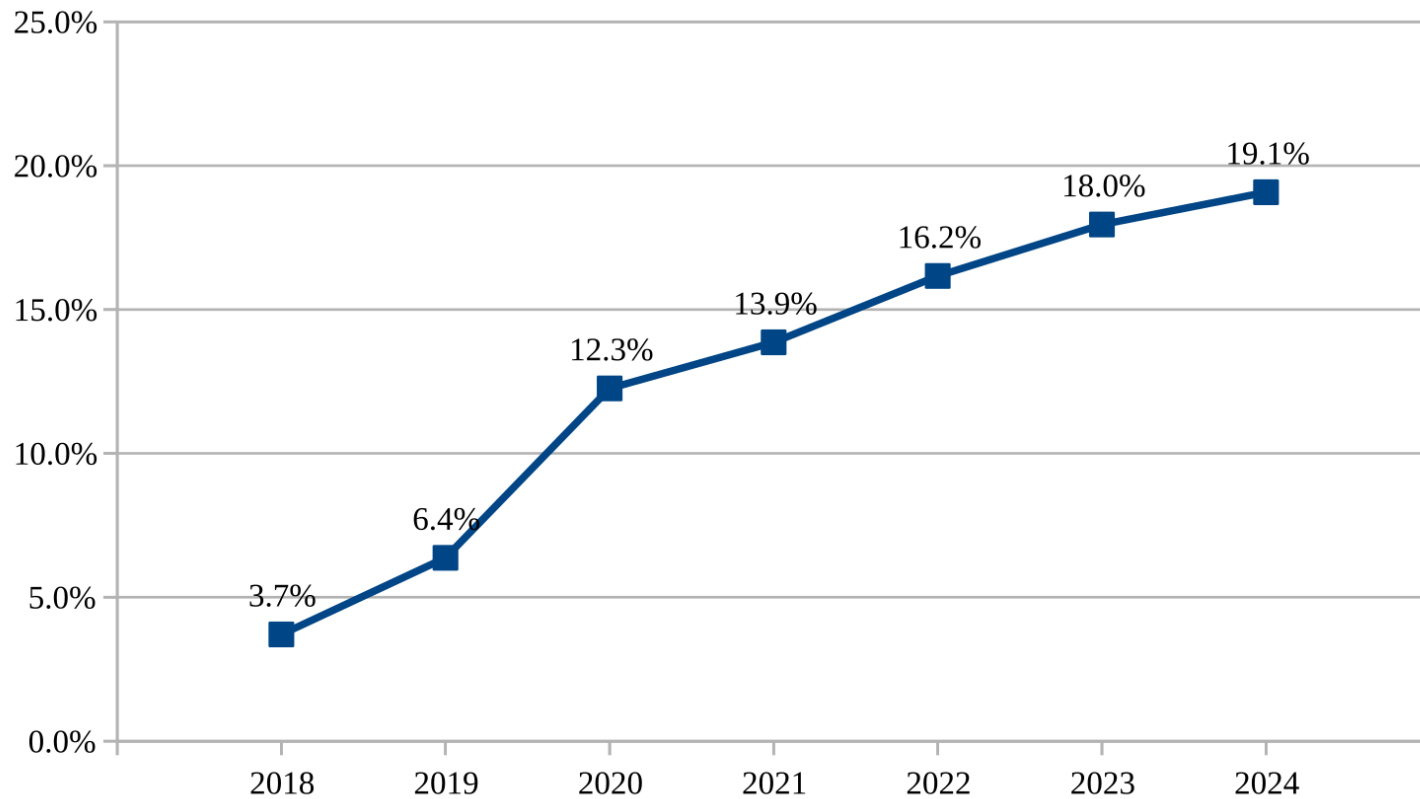
- Experiences with mixed-gender Scouting
 - Discuss your experience with female Scouts
 - Identify:
 - Positive experiences you have seen or heard (whether personally or shared)
 - Concerns you have heard
 - Be prepared to report back to the larger group



Membership Trends



Percent of Scouting America youth members who are female



Girls in Scouting, Globally



World Organization of the Scout Movement

- Historically focused on male youth
- Scouting America is a member of the WOSM
- 176 member organizations
 - At least 161 of whom admit both boys and girls
 - About 94% of WOSM organizations are mixed-gender

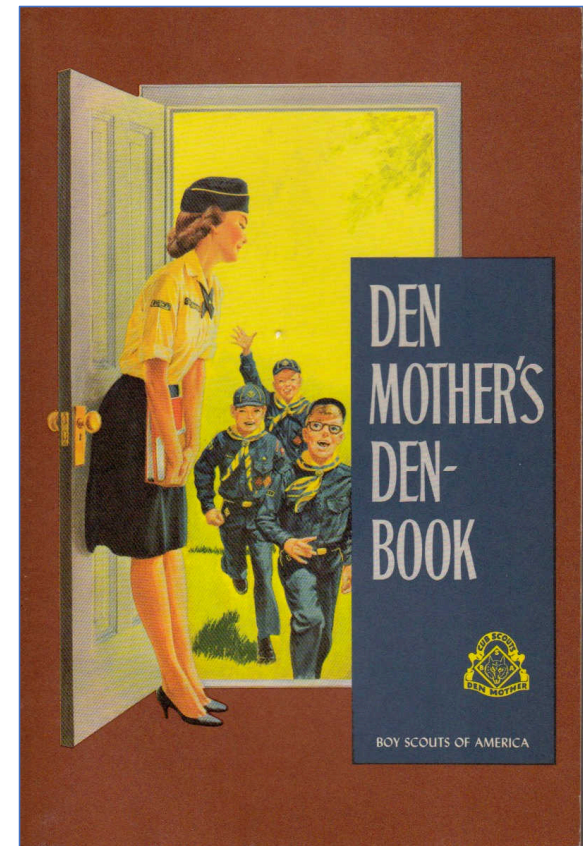


**WORLD[®]
SCOUTING**

Girls and Women in “Boy Scouts”

Women in Scouting

- 1930: Creation of Cub Scouts program, including unofficial position of “Den Mothers”
- 1936: BSA official registration allowed for women serving as Den Mothers
- 1965: First woman professional Scouter (Eleanor Parsons Pratt, curator of museums for Philmont)
- 1974: “Silver Fawn” award retired; women now eligible for Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, and Silver Buffalo
- 1976: Most positions open to women, including commissioner positions
- 1988: Women become eligible for Order of the Arrow membership



Girls and Women in “Boy Scouts”



Girls in Scouting

- 1969: Girls eligible to register as official members of Sea Scouts
- 1971: Girls eligible to register as official members of Exploring
- 2017: Announcement of plans to permit girls in all BSA programs
- 2018: Girls eligible to join Cub Scouts
- 2019: Girls eligible to join Scouts BSA (formerly Boy Scouts)
- 2024: Announcement of “Scouting America” rebranding

Girls and Women in “Boy Scouts”



Current practices in Scouting America

- Exploring, Sea Scouts, and Venturing are mixed-gender
- Cub Scouts packs and Scouts BSA troops may be single gender or mixed-gender per unit charter



Benefits of Diversity in Scouting



**What are the benefits of diversity
(not just gender) in Scouting?**

Benefits of Diversity in Scouting



- Different perspectives and experiences
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Medical/physical
 - Socioeconomic
 - Religion
 - Neurodiversity
 - Gender
- Girls benefit from experiencing Scouting
- Boys benefit from the additional perspectives
- Scouting is a melting pot



Common Concerns



- **Myth: Mixed-gender Scouting is unsafe**
- **Facts:**
 - Scouting America safety protocols have been developed by experts based on research, information from other organizations, and past experiences
 - Mixed-gender Scouting in Sea Scouts, Exploring, and Venturing since the 1970s
 - Aggressiveness tends to be moderated in multi-gender settings (Faris & Felmlee, 2011; Martin & Fabes, 2001)

Common Concerns



- **Myth: Boys benefit from Scouting being a “boy space”**
- **Facts:**
 - Gender differences emerge from gender-segregated activities (Eliot, 2015)
 - Boys are trailing girls in many measures of social achievement, such as educational attainment and some types of employment
 - Do gender-segregated activities play a role?
 - Boys and girls both benefit from more shared experiences



Common Concerns



- **Myth: Girls dominate in teenage social settings**
- **Myth: Boys are more numerous in Scouting, so girls won't have a chance**
- **Facts:**
 - Both of these myths are common, but neither seems to be a major issue in practice
 - Social dynamics are highly variable from group to group – even among single gender troops one patrol can become dominant
 - The pursuit of equity is not limited to gender aspects



Common Concerns

- **Myth: Going mixed-gender has been “too much, too fast”**
- **Facts:**
 - Mixed-gender Scouting in Sea Scouts, Exploring, and Venturing since the 1970s
 - Mixed-gender Scouting in other countries for decades
 - Cautious, slow introduction through carefully monitored pilot programs



Activity #2



Small group breakout:

- Responding to concerns
 - Each group will receive a scenario with a concern
 - Determine how to best respond
 - Be prepared to report back to the larger group

Summary



- There is a long history of Scouting being partially or fully mixed-gender, both domestically and in other countries
 - Scouting America programs have included mixed-gender Scouting since 1969, particularly Sea Scouts, Venturing, and Exploring
- Diversity benefits Scouts and Scouting by facilitating the sharing of different perspectives and backgrounds
 - Wide reach plus greater quality
- Studies support that boys and girls both benefit from mixed-gender experiences
 - Mixed-gender environments moderate aggression and enhance learning

**Questions?
Comments!**

