

Code of Conduct

Surprisingly enough, most den leaders find that if their den has a Code of Conduct to follow, their home, their furniture, and their dignity remain intact throughout their Cub Scout experience. Boys need to know just how far they can go, and the Den Code of Conduct will tell them this.

At your first den meeting sit down with the boys and discuss what a den meeting will be like and what you hope to accomplish. Introduce the cubs to the Cub Scout sign. Let them know that you have no intention of wasting your time screaming and hollering at them (the boys will appreciate that too!) and you will only be using the sign to get their attention. (A whistle is nice to use for rowdy outdoor games) Have the boys tell you what rules they think would be appropriate for den meetings. You'll be surprised – the boys will be harder on themselves than you would be. They'll be delighted when you decide to throw a rule or two out.

Here's a sample Den Code of Conduct written by boys:

- Don't interrupt
- No nasty jokes
- No punching or kicking
- Listen to Akela and don't talk back
- No cussing
- Don't stick your tongue out or spit
- No talking ugly about other people
- You might add a few things, like:
- Wipe your feet at the door.
- No running or yelling in the house.

Write all the rules on a poster board and display them at every meeting. You might find you need to add something later. You may also wish to review them from time to time. Once you have your den rules established, you need to find a system to enforce it that will work for you. One system that works well is "THREE STRIKES - YOU'RE OUT". The first time a boy breaks a rule, he gets a warning. The second time, the boy spends 5 minutes in Time Out. (Time Out is an interruption of a child's unacceptable behavior, by removing him from the scene of the action.) A chair off to the side, out of the activity of the den meeting, can serve as the Time Out area. After 5 minutes the boy is asked if he is ready to return to the group. If a boy doesn't control himself in Time Out, he moves on to his third strike. When a Cub commits his third infraction of the Code of Conduct, he is excused from the meeting and must call a parent to come and get him. Have a conference with the boy and at least one parent before he can return to the next den meeting. Be sure to explain the Den's Code of Conduct and the consequences of breaking the rules to the parents of boys in your den at each of our den parents meetings.