

## Den Activities

Discipline is seldom a problem if you time the activities so that the NEXT activity is always something they would rather do than what they are doing NOW. My meetings worked best with the following schedule.

- Gathering time
- Flag Ceremony
- Announcements
- Advancement Activity or Craft
- Games
- Snack
- Closing

For some reason there is always someone eager to do a flag ceremony in a wolf den, so that gets us started. They expect announcements, and have not gotten antsy yet, so it is an easy transition to explaining the activity or craft. When they are finished or bored (same thing) with the craft, they are always receptive to the idea of playing a game, likewise snack. Also, plan a backup plan for when an activity that sounded great just does not go over with the Scouts. I have had the chance to work with two dens on the same activity at different meetings, and what works with one den might be a complete flop with another, so be prepared with an alternative. As long as you keep them busy they are easy to handle.

Another approach to discipline that worked well for us is the bead jar. Each time they come to a meeting they get one bead for attendance, one for being in uniform, and one for a good turn they have done if they have done one, or if they do one during the meeting. We put the beads in a small jar and when it is full they all get to choose a special treat for the den. We spent part of one meeting coming up with rules of conduct for Scouts that should result in a bead being taken away. I had the Scouts make suggestions on what rules they thought belonged on the list, and then the Scouts voted on them. These became THEIR rules, and thinking about them and deciding about them was a positive learning experience. It only takes a gentle reminder from myself or one of the other Cubs to stop a behavior that is on the list.