



SCOUTING NOW
An Action Plan for Canadian Scouting

The New Scouting Century Campaign
April 2009

Introduction

While Scouting continues to grow throughout the world, and remains the world's largest youth movement, paradoxically, across the developed world, the Scouting Movement faces a declining Scouting population. Year over year, membership continues to shrink. This is, obviously, a significant concern.

From 1997 to April 2009, Scouts Canada has lost, cumulatively, about 138,000 member, or, on average, about 11,500 members per annum. If we project this annual average loss forward, as a worst-case scenario, Scouts Canada will have no members by 2017, a mere eight years in the future.

At least some of this decline, in Canada, can, however, be attributed to changing demographics and a shrinking youth population in a post-Baby Boom world. According to Statistics Canada, while Canada's population continues to grow, it is the result of international migration and not reproduction. Indeed, Canada's population grew by 5.4% from 2001-2006, the highest in the G8 and some two-thirds of that growth rate is fueled by immigration, with approximately 240,000 people arriving each year, on average, since 2001.

Yet, while Canada is growing, it is a graying population, with one in seven Canadians now a senior citizen -- a record level, according to Statistics Canada. If projections hold true, it is expected that the number of senior citizens in Canada will double in the next 25 years, and, within only about ten years, the number of senior citizens will outnumber youth.

The proportion of those under the age of 15 shrank, again, to 17.7% of the Canadian population - a record low - and the second consecutive intercensal period to see decline in this age group. By comparison, at the height of the baby-boom period, one in three Canadians was 14 years of age or younger. The median age of Canadians, as of 2006, is 39.5 years and is expected to reach 44 years by 2031.

This decline in the youth population is due, in part, to increased life expectancy and to birth rates of, on average, 1.6 over the last 30 years, which is, obviously, below natural replacement levels. Immigration does not effect this demographic shift because immigrants tend to come to Canada, on average, in their 30th year.¹

As a youth servicing organization, a rapid decline in youth population hurts our ability to recruit members.

To make matters more complicated, younger people are less likely to volunteer for organizations and the volunteer sector itself is "graying" just like the population. As one commentator explained:

What is clear is that while many young Canadians volunteered their time on an individual basis to help other individuals (13-50 percent), **comparatively few (4-10 per cent) 15-34-year-olds joined service clubs, civic/community organizations, work-based, and environmental associations.** Whether

¹This Demographic information comes from Statistics Canada's analysis of the 2006 census. See Laurent Martel and Éric Caron Malenfant, *Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2006, by Age and Sex: Findings*, <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/analysis/agesex/index.cfm> (accessed January 4, 2009)

volunteer work was performed individually or on behalf of associations, the 15-34-year-old cohort was generally less likely to be involved than older Canadians. These findings are in keeping with other studies identifying a positive correlation between age and measures of engagement in voluntary, civic or professional associations.²

And you can hardly blame young people for this. A recent Statistics Canada report noted that:

...averaged over the week (school and non-school days), teens [aged 15-19] did an average of 7.1 hours of unpaid and paid labour per day in 2005—virtually the same as the 7.2 hours adult Canadians aged 20 to 64 spent on the same activities. Only the distribution was different for adults, with an average of 8.3 hours of unpaid and paid work being done on weekdays, and 4.5 hours on weekends.

These teens also spend about 9.2 hours per week doing homework. Perhaps not surprisingly then, some 11% of teens report being very stressed due to lack of time, 39% report that they are under constant pressure to do more than they can handle, and 64% report cutting back on sleep to gain more time.³

Some additional facts (as of 2004):

- ➔ Most volunteering is undertaken by a relatively small group of Canadians: 11% of Canadians accounted for 77% of volunteer hours.
- ➔ More young people volunteer than those older, but generally give fewer hours than those who are older. Over half (55%) of all youth aged 15 to 24 volunteered, compared to one-third (32%) of seniors aged 65 and older). The exception to this trend is the 25 to 34 age group who were less likely to volunteer (42%) than either youth or those who are between 35 and 44 (51% of whom volunteered). The average number of hours volunteered generally rises with age, from 139 hours a year for youth to 245 hours for seniors.⁴ Part of this increase can be attributed to the requirement that teens achieve a certain number of mandatory volunteer in order to graduate.

In other words, we are servicing a generation (or cohort) that is in demographic decline and whom generally seek to volunteer on an individual basis and not join an organization due, in part, to a workload that is roughly equal to an adult working full time. Furthermore, when they do volunteer, teens do not contribute a significant amount of time, preferring more short-term and *ad hoc* opportunities.

We also face a number of other issues that effect our membership numbers, besides demography, which are, in no particular order:

² See L.S. Tossutti, "Youth Volunteerism and Political Engagement in Canada." Canadian Political Science Association, <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/papers-2004/Tossutti.pdf> at 5-6. (accessed January 4, 2009). Emphasis added.

³Katherine Marshall, "The busy lives of teens," *Statistics Canada: Perspectives* (May 2007) 5-15. This is available for download from Statistics Canada's website.

⁴ See *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2006).

1. Our Historic Sense of Self-Importance.

We must shake off our own sense of self-importance. It is true that, once upon a time, Scouting had greater numerical strength, but this is not particularly surprising when you consider that Scouting's peak in the country coincided with the peak of the Baby Boom, when one out of three Canadians was a young person.

As much as we may, corporately, and personally, believe in Robert Baden-Powell's vision and the values of Scouting, we cannot assume that everyone will necessarily share these values and we certainly cannot continue to entertain the quaint notion that a member joins and is thereafter expected to remain a member throughout childhood and on into adulthood. For many parents, Scouting is just one option amongst many for their children; they may, if asked, put their children into a Scouting program, but just as easily take them out for a whole host of reasons. We now exist in a highly fractured youth activity marketplace (both for profit and non-profit). There is now an organization and an opportunity for every cause under the sun. Every one of them is competing with us for volunteers and youth members. A presumption of superiority, moral or otherwise, is fatal.

2. The Transformation of the Non-Profit World

From the 1800s until the 1960s and 1970s, most organizations followed a broad chapter-based organizational model. Scouting fits into this mold, with groups, areas/districts, councils, provinces, and a national council. Beginning in the 1960s, "cause" focused professionally managed organizations emerged, which had the effect of disconnecting volunteers and encouraging them to donate money rather than time.⁵ Our major competition, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Clubs, and even municipal youth programs are an example of the highly successful shift away from volunteer-driven activities to those organized by professional staff, funded by "member" contributions and fund-raising.

In an age where people would rather give money than time, organizations rely less on volunteer hours and more on voluntary donations and government grants to provide professional services. Scouting has tentatively explored this transformation with its "ScoutsAbout" and the British Columbia "Scouts in Schools" programs but we need to continue to re-imagine how we can deliver our services and our values in ways that harness these possibilities.

We also need to think about what it means to be a member and how we define membership. Many other youth-serving organisations count every young person they ever come into contact with while we do not necessarily track non-members that we do serve. For instance, it might make sense to track both "members" and "youth served by Scouting". But, for world census purposes, "members" must meet certain criteria set out in the World Organization of the Scouting Movement's Constitution to be considered Scouts.

⁵ See Theda Skocpol, *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003) 127: "Professionally run advocacy groups and nonprofit institutions now dominate civil society, as people seek influence and community through a very new mix of largely memberless voluntary organisations."

3. Our Inadvertent Abandonment of our Leadership Role in Canadian Society

Traditionally, Scouting was seen as an expert on informal youth education, the outdoors, and international peace and development issues. Over the years, we have become too inwardly focused and this shapes our programs, our activities and even our discourse.

As a result, we have been forgotten by most Canadians who, if they are aware of us at all, hold inaccurate or old-fashioned opinions about Scouting. Canadians look to our competition in these areas for insight and comment. We need to claw ourselves back onto the national stage.

4. Dysfunctional Relations

Without a doubt, there is a significant need to improve relations between some staff and volunteers and between some senior volunteers and those who work directly with youth every week. Indeed, there is often outright distrust and anger directed at Scouts Canada staff, while many staff members are openly hostile to volunteers. Some of this hostility, on the part of volunteers is due, rightly or wrongly, to a perception that some staff are protected from termination, despite an apparent inability to perform their jobs.

As one senior volunteer noted, some volunteers previously believed that staff people effectively "owned" the movement and, as a result, volunteer contributions were discounted. Now, the opposite extreme is being experienced, with volunteers believing that they are effectively unsupported by employees who are not held to a performance standard that is consistent with Scouting's values. He argues that the pendulum, between these extremes must be brought to a balanced mid-point, where employee and volunteer goals and values are aligned, and where both work collaboratively to achieve Scouting's mission.

Much of this could be addressed through better volunteer relations and increased, meaningful democratic debate and discussion. There are no real means for national dialogue, debate, and critique. Sadly, these conversations are often seen as a challenge to authority and not a means to strengthen volunteer involvement and to improve our policies, practices, and organization.

5. We have Allowed Ourselves to Become Boring

As one astute political consultant observed recently: "For businesses, for unions, for any goal-driven organization, it's always the same: *you can't achieve great things without taking great risks* ...[C]itizens and the news media, and just about any sentient being are astute. They know when you are playing it safe. They know when you are being timid. When they sense you are being deliberately boring, they tune you out, sometimes permanently"⁶

Now is the time, with challenges to Scouting all around us, to take the great risks and reap the great rewards that come in sharing our vision of creating a better world.

⁶Warren Kinsella, *The War Room: Political Strategies for Business, NGOs, and Anyone Who Wants to Win* (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2007) at 136.

6. We must harness the Digital Age and understand the Digital Generation

The Internet is now a profound social and economic force in modern society and has significantly shaped the so-called "Digital Generation" (sometimes called the "Millennials" or "Generation "Y") of those aged, roughly, aged 30 and younger.

The prestigious Pew Research Centre, in the United States, reports that from 1993 - 2008, those people reporting that they received their news from newspapers declined from 58% to 34% and from the nightly network newscasts declined from 60% to 29%. Meanwhile, they report that during the same time span, those people who surfed the Internet from news increased from virtually nil to 37%.⁷ The Internet is now a major source of information and is rapidly threatening the "old media" hegemony on information. Indeed, the Internet is now more important as a place of news, than newspapers. It is no surprise that commentators are forecasting the collapse of the newspaper industry and this suggests that we would do well to marshal our resources, currently focused on gaining newspaper and television coverage, for the Internet.

In 2007, Statistics Canada reports that 73% of Canadians aged 16 years of age and older (about 19.2 million people) went online for personal reasons in the twelve months prior to the survey. Furthermore, Canadians used the Internet to purchase goods and services in 2007 worth a whopping \$12.8 billion, an increase of 61% since 2005.⁸ Younger Canadians are more likely to use the Internet for so-called "web 2.0" functions -- online sharing, collaboration and communicating.

There is no question, therefore, that the Internet is a significant cultural phenomena, which must be harnessed, but we must also be aware of how profoundly our new members and young leaders, part of the Digital Generation, have been shaped by the Internet. They have grown up immersed in a digitally rich environment.

Don Tapscott, the author of *Grown Up Digital*, is an entrepreneur and an adjunct professor at the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. He has spent a great deal of time investigating this generation and this book, and his other texts, provide insight we can use.

Specifically, he identifies eight generational "norms" for the digital generation, which he called the "Net Gen", which we quote:

A. Freedom

"They want freedom in everything they do, from freedom of choice to freedom of expression...While older generations feel overwhelmed by the proliferation of sales, channels, product types, and brands, the Net Gen takes it for granted. Net Geners leverage technology to cut through the clutter and find the marketing message that fits their needs. They also expect to choose where and when they work. They use technology to escape traditional office constraints and integrate their work lives with

⁷Pew Research Centre, "Key News Audiences Now Blend Online and Traditional Sources: Audience Segments in a Changing News Environment", August 17, 2008, <http://people-press.org/report/444/news-media> (accessed January 5, 2009).

⁸See Statistics Canada summaries at <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/080612/dq080612b-eng.htm> and <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/081117/dq081117a-eng.htm> (date accessed: January 4, 2008)

their home and social lives. Net Geners seek the freedom to change jobs, freedom to take their own path, and to express themselves."

B. Customizers

"They love to customize, personalize...Today's youth can change the media world around them--their desktop, website, ring tone, handle, screen saver, news sources, and entertainment. They have grown up getting what media they want, when they want it, and being able to change it. Millions around the world don't just access the Web, they are creating it by creating online content. Now the need to customize is extending beyond the digital world to just about everything they touch. Forget standard job descriptions and only one variety of product..."

C. Scrutinizers

"They are the new scrutinizers...Transparency, namely stakeholder access to pertinent information about companies and their offerings just seems natural to the Net Gen...Businesses targeting the Net Gen should expect and welcome intense scrutiny of its products, promotional efforts, and corporate practices. The Net Gen knows that their market power allows them to demand more of companies, which goes for employers as well."

D. Seekers of Corporate Integrity and Openness

"They look for corporate integrity and openness when deciding what to buy and where to work. The Internet, and other information and communication technologies, strip away the barriers between companies and their various constituencies, including consumers, activists, and shareholders. Whether consumers are exposing a flawed viral marketing campaign or researching a future employer, Net Geners make sure company values align with their own."

E. Combining Entertainment and Play

"The Net Gen wants entertainment and play in their work, education and social life. This generation brings a playful mentality to work. From their experience in the latest video game, they know that there's always more than one way to achieve a goal.-- This is a generation that has been bred on interactive experiences. Brand recognition is no longer enough, something leading companies recognize."

F. Collaboration and Relationships

"They are the collaboration and relationship generation. Today, youth collaborate on Facebook, play multiuser video games; text each other incessantly; share files for school, work, or just for fun....they also engage in relationship-oriented purchasing. Nine out of ten young people we interviewed said that if a best friend recommends a product, they are likely to buy it. They influence each other through what we call N-fluence Networks -- online networks of Net Geners who, among other things, discuss brands, companies, products, and services."

G. The Need for Speed

"The Net Gen has a need for speed -- and not just in video games. Real-time chats with a database of global contacts have made rapid communication the new norm for the Net Generation. In a world where speed characterizes the flow of information among vast networks of people, communication with friends, colleagues, and superiors takes place faster than ever. And marketers and employers should realize that Net Geners

expect the same quick communication from others - every instant message should draw an instant response."

H. Innovation

"...A twentysomething in the workforce wants the new Blackberry, Palm, or Iphone not because the old one is no longer cool, but because the new one does so much more. They seek innovative companies as employers and are constantly looking for innovative ways to collaborate, entertain themselves, learn, and work."⁹

Tapscott's roadmap of the Digital Generation is a valuable one for Scouting. It shows us how important the internet is, and how we must expand our web presense in significant ways, and also how important that Scouting be open and transparent in its operations.

This is a cohort that appreciates peer/collaborate/experiential education. The old idea of a teacher broadcasting knowledge in a one-size-fits-all approach does not. Thus, in some ways, Scouting is well placed, because of its long history of "learning by doing" pedagogy. But we also have to think about how these cultural changes will effect other aspects of our program.

The Future is Right Here. Right Now.

While the issues facing Scouting are significant, and the changes taking place around us are increasing rapidly, all is certainly not lost!

Firstly, it is important to note that, for the most part, our programs are sound, effective and time-tested while being capable of constant re-imagining to ensure freshness and dynamism. This Action Plan is about delivering our services better, not about the services themselves and makes no substantive program-related recommendations.

Secondly, it is important to note that one National Scout Organization (NSO) in the developed world has stopped their membership decline, and, in fact, is growing: The Scout Association in the United Kingdom ("The Scout Association"). As of the end of April, 2009, the Association reported year over year growth for four consecutive years and have reached close to 500,000 members. Despite the largest growth in adult volunteers in 23 years, and opening up 13,000 new spaces, there is still a whopping 33,000 person waiting list.¹⁰ It is, therefore, a useful experiential model to reflect upon and use.

The key lesson we can draw from the The Scout Association experience is the importance of shaping a modern, professional public relations experience and, thereby, shaping the Scouting discourse in the UK. An exciting new badge program was launched, including badges for public relations, mountain biking, and healthy eating, street sports, and even quad bike racing, which caught the media's eye.¹¹ They are even tackling the hot-button issue of childhood obesity.¹² By taking up important issues

⁹These eight norms come from Don Tapscott, *Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009) at 34-36.

¹⁰See The Scout Association, "Scouting census records record growth", at http://www.scouts.org.uk/news_view.php?news_id=178

¹¹ See, for instance, The Daily Mail's report at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-507780/New-Scout-badges-Be-prepared---make-fruit-salad.html>

¹² See <http://kidsoutdoors.com>, which is organised by the The Scout Association to get more young people active in outdoor activities and undertaking studies on the subject.

facing the country, they attract media attention and build an image of expertise – something the media has long fetishized. They have a large public relations department and have reestablished their expertise.

To increase their membership and tackle their growing waiting lists, The Scout Association has launched their "Big Adventure" campaign to get parents and others associated with Scouting to become members. Their research has shown the "the most effective way of turning adults on the edge of the Group into volunteers is to give them an active role in the planning and running of a residential experience."¹³

We must recruit and retain young, dynamic and relevant leaders from the Digital Generation. Everyone is busy and it has to be easier to deliver our program! Good programming brings in the kids. Without good leaders, groups die. When volunteers fail to deliver on the promise of our program they create negative word-of-mouth advertising. We need to create a system to support new leaders, many who were not Scouts themselves, and help them integrate into existing groups or create new ones. We must also remember, however, that our training does not necessarily guarantee good leaders and good program.

Finally, we must re-shape the way we deliver our messages, and deliver our services in keeping with the societal changes being driven by the Digital Generation. Scouting's number one priority must be the development of effective web and new media presences because our members, and potential members will expect and demand it. And corporate style websites just will not do. They must be technologically savvy and media-rich, with flash animation, video, and the opportunity to collaborate, share, and participate. Current, timid, steps in that direction are not sufficient.

We also recognize that we are not alone in our concerns. The World Organization of the Scouting Movement's *Action for Growth Report* contains a good conceptual framework. We also strongly encourage Scouts Canada's "Making it Easier to Join Task Force (MEIT-J)" and endorse online registration as an vitally important goal, a service the digital generation will expect and demand. While this is not a specific action item in the report, it is vital that this process be completed immediately. We also endorse the Backcheck program as a means of assisting volunteers and groups in the volunteer screening process and reducing demands on volunteer time. We must move quickly!

If we fail to respond to these cultural pressures, we face the same decline facing other 19th and 20th century youth and adult organizations, designed for a particular time and place, that are unable to cope with change and that are collapsing, as a result.

For this reason, we have, after much thought and analysis, prepared the following **Action Plan for Canadian Scouting** as a means of setting an agenda for change and for spurring conversations about how all of us can help spread Robert Baden-Powell's vision for creating a better world.

¹³See The Scout Association, "Join the Big Adventure" at <http://www.scouts.org.uk/cms.php?pageid=1859&pagenotlive=1>.

ACTION ITEM #1

REAL YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

WOSM Strategic Priority #1: Youth Involvement - revitalising the Scout Method.

This strategic priority aims at assisting NSOs in revitalising this fundamental element of our Movement, which is crucial to its effectiveness and its ability to achieve its mission.

SC Strategic Direction #4. Involving Youth —

As a continuing integral part of Scouting's Mission, Principles, Practices and Method, optimize youth engagement in policy determination, management, promotion and program design and delivery at all levels as appropriate to their age and experience.

Background

The "Scout method" of youth involvement, through sixes, patrols, and Venturer and Rover executives, is long established, but it is not clear how often it is really being used.

Youth involvement in key leadership roles (not including Youth commissioners) is important from a communication and visual imaging perspective.

In many countries, Scout Leaders face mandatory retirement ages of 25 or 30, even at the national level.

The UK Scout Association has developed an innovative "Youth Spokesperson" program so that young people are the public face of the Movement in the UK. They are being interviewed in local and national media after being trained in public relations and have become the public, modern face of British Scouting. Sadly, in this country, there have been too many examples of inappropriate older persons being interviewed on behalf of Scouting, which sends the wrong visual signals.

Action Item #1.1

Youth Involvement Ratios

We call on all Scout Councils to reach the following targets:

- a) By 2010, 15% of Area Commissioners and Deputy Area Commissioners will be under the age of 35
- b) By 2013, 30% of Area Commissioners, Area Service Teams, and Deputy Area Commissioners will be under the age of 30
- c) By 2017, 50% of Area Commissioners, Area Service Teams, and Deputy Area Commissioners will be under the age of 30
- d) By 2013, all Youth Commissioners/Representatives will be under the age of 17.¹⁴

Action Deadlines

- See Above
- Ongoing yearly evaluation and public disclosure

Person Responsible

- Council Commissioners and/or Deputy Council Commissioners for Youth

¹⁴These numbers and dates are offered by way of example and are not intended to be cast in stone; they are subject to debate and consideration

Financial/Staff Implications

→ None

Action Item #1.2**Creation of Youth Spokesperson Program**

We call for the development a Youth Spokesperson Program, available to all members of Scouts Canada by:

- a) Developing a training syllabus for young media spokespeople, modeled on the UK program
- b) Holding a training course by setting a course date, advertising the program and recruiting participants
- c) Distributing the program/syllabus to all Scouts Canada bodies
- d) Provide ongoing funding for the program
- e) Encouraging a communications policy that requires a trained and prepared Young Spokesperson be used, wherever possible, for all media requests/interviews and other public appearances.

Action Deadlines

- First training course to be completed by end of the 2010 Scout year
- Evaluate outcomes by end of the 2011 Scout year and adjust program as needed

Person Responsible

→ TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

- Cost of outside communication consultants, if necessary
- Cost of developing syllabus, and the cost of the weekend(s)
- Cost of promotion

Action Item #1.3**Reformatting the Role of Area Youth Commissioners**

The role of the Youth Commissioners at the Area level should be amended to include the following:

- a) Youth Commissioners are responsible for ensuring that youth involvement is taking place at Six, Patrol, Court of Honour and Venturer Executive levels by visiting the sections within their Area and encouraging such activities
- b) Youth Commissioners will assist in ensuring program quality standards are being met

Action Deadlines

- See Above
- Ongoing yearly evaluation and reporting

Person Responsible

→ Council Commissioners and/or Deputy Council Commissioners for Youth

Financial/Staff Implications

→ None

ACTION ITEM #2

RECRUITING MEMBERS & FINDING NEW YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

WOSM Strategic Priority #4: Reaching Out - breaking down barriers and working with broader segments of society. The aim of this strategic priority is to support NSOs in identifying and responding to the needs of young people, adults and society where Scouting is currently not having an impact. This should result in an increase in membership and increase Scouting's impact in the world today.

WOSM Strategic Priority #5: Volunteers in Scouting - developing new approaches to broaden the base of adult support. This strategic priority aims at redefining the concept of volunteering as applied to Scouting and reviewing policies and practices to help NSOs recruit and retain a new group of adults in Scouting.

SC Strategic Direction #2: Broadening Volunteer Support —
Develop new approaches to attract and retain adult volunteers.

Background

In many ways, Scouting has lost an entire generation of members, who are now just becoming old enough to volunteer. In order to grow, we need to outreach to this cohort of 20-somethings on their terms, in their venues, and counter-act stereotypes of Scouting. They need to be reassured that Scouting is exciting, relevant, pluralistic, multi-cultural, and diverse. We have been forgotten and we need to show them that we exist. Of course, the same reassurance must also be delivered to parents and potential members as well!

A "static booth" is just not enough and a "fake campsite" is just plain boring. We need fun event-style activities and promotional items as "give-aways" that draw people in – a portable climbing wall, for instance.

We need to be in places that are unexpected that, by our presence, counteracts stereotypes about Scouting.

We also have to remember that undertaking these activities do not automatically result in membership, but that these activities must be part of a larger public outreach campaign to reinforce our image and expertise. This is not about 1+1 = new member recruiting, but, rather, it is about re-branding Scouting as young, fresh, and exciting. Only then will Scouting grow.

We need to be developing partnerships with all kinds of organizations and reminding them that we have a program for their youth. Scouting could partner with Hockey and/or Soccer leagues to form combination Scouting-Soccer or Scouting-Hockey teams. With sufficient numbers, we could even form our own league. You join and get the best of both, without the scheduling conflicts. As of 2005, some 51% of young Canadians participated in some form of sporting activity. About half of these children participated in

more than one such activity. Yet, children in Canada's three largest cities are the least likely to participate in sports.¹⁵

It is no accident that schools, universities and other organizations spend a great deal of effort in managing and cultivating their alumni and we should do the same; it's a tremendous pool of donors, leaders, and general volunteers who can provide the materials and/or services we need to execute our programs.

Scouts Canada has, internationally, been a key supporter of the Extension Scouts program (also known as Street Scouts), particularly in Kenya and Nigeria. Perhaps its time we brought the program to Canada for our own street kids?

Action Item #2.1

Creation of an Outreach Team

We call on Greater Toronto Council and the Greater Toronto Scout Foundation to establish an Outreach Team of part-time young community development workers and volunteers for Greater Toronto Council. This team will focus on three areas: (i) Events (ii) Significant Venues, and (iii) Colleges and Universities. Outcomes will be shared with other Councils and with funding, it can be offered across Canada.

Essential to this plan is the establishment of a stable of part-time community development workers (i.e. Venturers and Rovers), who will be paid small honorariums per event. Using web-based technologies, these team members would sign up for events they wish to work for, based on their availability.

(i) Events

The Team will:

- a) Identify major non-traditional events to set up booth/interactive activities
- b) Identify the exciting activity (i.e. portable rock climbing wall) to share
- a) Attend events and meet the public to show modern face of Scouting

Action Deadline

- ➔ By January, 2010, a list of major events are identified and chosen as strategic priorities along with proposed activities and swag, which are budgeted
- ➔ By Spring, 2010, the team attends their first event.
- ➔ by August 2010, evaluate progress and begin planning for next year

(ii) Significant Venues

The Team will:

- d) Identify significant venues/locations where we can set up informational and/or activity booths in and around Toronto such as major private buildings (i.e. First Canadian Place, Dundas Square, etc) aimed at employees, particularly over the lunch period.
- b) Book venues
- c) Attend venues and meet the public to show modern face of Scouting with exciting activities

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, *The Daily: Study: Organized sports participation among children*, <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/080603/d080603a.htm> (accessed January 4, 2009)

Action Deadline

- ➔ By September, 2009, identify several venues, book, and host activities
- ➔ By December, 2009, evaluate project

(iii) Colleges and Universities

The Team will:

- a) Identify one or more possible venues/opportunities at "Frosh Week" events
- b) Host information activities
- c) Invite visitors to attend a fun weekend at local Scout camps
- d) Visitors/potential recruits are bused to campsite where they take part in camping and fun activities and are recruited as leaders

Action Deadline

- ➔ Identify Frosh Weeks and schedule participation for September 2010
- ➔ Evaluation of project by December, 2011

Person Responsible

- ➔ Greater Toronto Council/Greater Toronto Scout Foundation

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of staff, if hired
- ➔ Cost of booking venue space, if applicable
- ➔ Cost of activities/pamphlets, insurance, etc.
- ➔ Cost of busing and activities along with cost of campsite, if applicable

Action Item #2.2**Partnership Development**

So many organizations exist to support youth and many could be encouraged to work with us, instead of competing with us. Why not, for instance, form Hockey or Soccer Scout Groups?

We call for an investigation into potential partnership development by:

- a) Identifying potential partnerships with kindred organizations and sports leagues
- b) Researching how best the organizations could work with Scouting
- c) Identifying persons who would be willing to take the lead on developing the partnership program, such as a Cub Pack-Soccer team.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Preliminary Research due by January, 2010
- ➔ Partnership development is ongoing

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for membership development

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Some staff support
- ➔ Production of promotional materials if partnership programming moves forward

Action Item #2.3

Extension Scouts

We call for an investigation into the development and operation of an Extension Scouts program for disadvantaged and/or homeless youth by:

- a) Undertaking research on homelessness in Toronto and other major cities and speak with existing service providers
- b) Investigating different models of Extension Scouts and determine which is best suited for Toronto: (i) African model (ii) A Scoutsabout/Extreme Scouting program version for homeless youth
- c) Determining funding, and alternative revenue streams, and operational details, such as location

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigative report due by September 2010, followed immediately by a decision to proceed or not.
- ➔ If the program is approved, first Extension Scout program will be operational by September 2011

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for membership development

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Staffing
- ➔ Cost of program delivery

Action Item #2.4

Alumni Development

For too long the B-P Guild and Scouting Auxiliary programmes have languished, the poor forgotten cousins of the Scouting Movement yet there is tremendous potential for adult recruitment and liaison.

Some work has taken place in networking recipients of the Chief Scout's Award, Queen's Venturer Award, Queen's Scout Award, etc through the new Chief Scout Association, organized by the national Scouts Canada Foundation but membership is restricted to those members or former members who achieved these awards. Its social networking, in scope and branding, is also aimed at older people.

To take advantage of these opportunities, we call for an investigation into:

- a) The creation of a Scout Network program, similar to the one in the United Kingdom. This program would not replace Rovers; rather, it would be a social networking program for people interested in maintaining a connection with Scouting but are not yet ready to join Rovers or become a leader. This could be extended as a kind of Extreme Scouting program for young adults or as working vacations, which is a growing trend in sustainable/eco-vacationing.¹⁶

¹⁶Participates pay to go a vacation but, rather than sunning on the beach somewhere, they undertake good works from feeding the poor to assisting in archaeological digs.

- b) The transformation of the Auxiliary concept into something similar to Police and Fire Department Auxiliaries. Persons with special skills or limited time could be registered as a Scouting Auxiliary member on a part-time basis to assist at Scouting events or even come into sections to help if leaders are away/unavailable/sick perhaps in connection with the Resource Database program. This would build on the growing trend of part-time leaders in groups. Such Auxiliaries could be organized at the Area or Council level.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigation report due by September 2010.
- ➔ Implementation of program by September 2011.

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for membership development/TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ staff time for investigative phase
- ➔ staff, production and promotion costs once activated

Action Item #2.5

Investigation of New Group Model

The “tried and true” model for delivering Scouting’s programs consists of individual groups, existing as self-contained entities, supported by Area/Council/National teams and “sponsored” by another organization that may or may not have much of a role.

The expansion of the “Scoutsabout” Program demonstrates that there are other ways of delivering Scouting’s programmes. Perhaps some groups or sections could be “sponsored” directly by the Area or the Council? Perhaps the Area could organize teams of volunteers to run “Sections” across the Area and thereby take the Scoutsabout concept and apply it a core program? In the UK, Explorer Units (i.e. Venturer Companies in Canada) are organized at the Area level.

We call for an investigation that would:

- a) Research the steps necessary to create a new group, the role of group sponsors, and whether operating a section requires the creation of a group
- b) Propose new models, based on the UK Explorer/Network/Scoutsabout experience
- c) Launch funded pilot projects as needed

Action Deadline

- ➔ Report and Model Proposals due by May, 2010
- ➔ Pilot Project implementation by September, 2010

Person Responsible

- ➔ Council Commissioner

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Minimal, with some staff support

ACTION ITEM #3

MAKING IT EASIER FOR NEW & CURRENT VOLUNTEERS

WOSM Strategic Priority #5: Volunteers in Scouting - developing new approaches to broaden the base of adult support. This strategic priority aims at redefining the concept of volunteering as applied to Scouting and reviewing policies and practices to help NSOs recruit and retain a new group of adults in Scouting.

SC Strategic Direction #2: Broadening Volunteer Support —
Develop new approaches to attract and retain adult volunteers.

Background

For Scouting to grow, we must recruit new leaders, who will strengthen existing groups and help establish new groups.

There is a significant learning curve in being a leader. To keep new leaders in this highly competitive volunteer world, we need to make it easier to:

- ➔ Join in the first place and find the role that suits them
- ➔ Get oriented and trained quickly and easily
- ➔ Deliver the program at the standards we expect.

If we do not accomplish this, they either never join in the first place or leave frustrated, all of which have negative cascading consequences. But this can be easily accomplished through prepared programming and easier training.

We must recognize that the old idea of a leader volunteering for most of his or her life is likely a myth. Many leaders, for a whole host of reasons, can only volunteer for a year, or two or until their child leaves. We cannot assume that a volunteer has several years to get trained. They need to be able to take a training course the instant they sign up.

All of the Orientation Course and much of a Woodbadge Part I covers knowledge that can be successfully shared through online training. Online training is becoming more common and accepted amongst younger volunteers and employees. Volunteers can pursue the course at their own speed, from home. It also offers a greater chance of engagement and learning through individual participation and interaction. Such a course would not, however, replace a traditional on-site training course for those who wish to take it. We cannot delay implementation of online training any longer.

New volunteers can be overwhelmed with the responsibilities of leading a section, particularly those who are new to Scouting. Planning and preparing meeting syllabi can be a significant increase in workload. Jumpstart programming is a great resource but is generic in nature. Why not create a yearly, customized, weekly program, for each section? We also know about most major events in the Scouting calendar, and these can be embedded into the yearly Jumpstart to ensure attendance.

Action Item #3.1

Online Orientation/Woodbadge Training

We call for the urgent establishment of an optional Online Orientation Course and Woodbadge Part I Training Course for new leaders. This includes:

- a) Reviewing the current Orientation and Part 1 Training Syllabi and learning outcome expectations for all Woodbadge courses in the Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections
- b) Creating online training syllabi for the three junior sections, using reading, video and interactive elements
- c) Launch the online course, test system, and advertise availability.
- d) Investigate online course options for non-Woodbadge topics and, if appropriate, deliver them, even to non-members as a revenue stream.

This system, ideally, would share information with the MMS, so that a MMS number would be used to log in, and, upon completion, would automatically record completion in their records, thereby reducing staff labour inputs.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Training course to be live by the end of 2010 Scout year.
- ➔ Additional courses going online by following year.
- ➔ Ongoing evaluation of courses as needed

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for Volunteer Training

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Staff or contract persons would have to be retained to:
- ➔ Write online training syllabi
- ➔ Film video and prepare other online resources
- ➔ Create training website

Action Item #3.2

Prepared Programming

We call for the immediate creation of an optional standardized September-June weekly syllabus for the Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections suitable for all Scouts Canada leaders, regardless of location. This will be accomplished by:

- a) Reviewing Program Standards and existing Jumpstart programming
- b) Identifying holidays and special days that may impact program
- b) Reviewing all existing Scouting events and determine which are appropriate for embedding into yearly Jumpstart program
- c) Prepare broad calendar year by theme and by section
- d) Prepare monthly and weekly programs by section
- e) Proof and prepare for online publishing and distribute
- f) Begin preparing new Jumpstart for next Scouting year

Action Deadline

- ➔ Prepared programming will be available for Beaver, Cub, and Scout sections by September 2010.
- ➔ Ongoing evaluations are held as needed, but at least once every Scout year

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for program and supported by volunteers

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Labour costs
- ➔ Production costs, which should be minimal if produced and circulated electronically

Action Item #3.3**New Leader Welcome Pack**

We propose that every new leader, upon registration, should receive a welcome pack, delivered by mail or email, containing:

- a) An updated version of "First Steps" document that has been prepared by Greater Toronto Council,
- b) A copy of the new yearly Jumpstart program
- c) Details on how to register for their online Orientation/Woodbadge training
- d) A card with their MMS username and temporary password

Action Deadline

Welcome packs delivered once Jumpstart and online training website are available.

Person Responsible

- ➔ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for volunteers and/or designated office staff person

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Labour costs in preparing packages, unless MMS can do this automatically
- ➔ Production costs, if any, and postage, if sent by mail

Action Item #3.4**New Group Action Kit**

While we do advertise our desire to recruit leaders, we do not do a good job of advertising the opportunity of starting a group. Many individuals do not seem to be aware that they can start their own.

To remedy this, we call for the creation of an electronic New Group Action Kit with all necessary paperwork and information written for a non-Scouting audience. Two versions will be created:

- b) For individuals who wish to establish a group
- c) For organizations interested in using Scouting as their youth program

Action Deadline

- ➔ to be written and distributed for website inclusion by the end of September 2010

Person Responsible

→ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for Group Support

Financial/Staff Implications

→ Cost of production

Action Item #3.4**Resource People Database**

There are many leaders, former members, and non-members out in the community who are willing to visit Groups to share their hobby, knowledge, or passion. These guests take the burden off of leaders who have to provide programming at every meeting.

We call for an investigation into the creation of an online, self-managed, database of such persons, which can be accessed by leaders. This would be made available to all Councils.

Action Deadline

→ to be added to websites by the end of September 2010, if investigation outcomes are positive.

Person Responsible

→ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for program

Financial/Staff Implications

→ Cost of production

Action Item #3.5**Making it Easier to Use Scout Camps and Properties**

What are we doing to ensure that all youth members are taking part in outdoor activities at least one every month? What barriers exist that prevent young people from using our camps?

One of the keys to recruitment and retention of members is exciting and challenging outdoor experiences. We already have extensive resources, at camps, but not every group can get there, and leaders may be "scared off" because of the work involved in organizing such trips and their inexperience. Can we not take steps to make camping easier through prepared weekend programming?

Like in the UK, significant regional Scout Camps should become Scout Activity Centres. In the past 5 years The Scout Association has successfully managed to transform Scout properties from places for Scout groups to camp and play into Scout Activity Centres, which offer a range of in-situ programs and activities. This makes these camps not only more attractive to Scouting youth, but also to Leaders who do not have to create camp programs and activities in order to take the youth camping. These Centres are then available, during the week, for non-Scouting purposes such as corporate leadership retreats.

We call on Greater Toronto Council and the Greater Toronto Scout Foundation to investigate:

- a) Designating a staff person to prepare regular outdoor adventure activities within the City of Toronto and/or at Scouts Canada camps, (rock climbing, canoeing, etc) for every section
- b) Offering bus service to Woodland Trails and/or other Scout Camps, from designated subway stops within the City of Toronto
- c) Sharing learning outcomes with other Scout Councils and Scout Foundations

We also call on Scouts Canada's Ontario Incorporated Body, to strengthen camping capacity by:

- a) developing a one-stop Scout camp website, that would include:
 - i) detailed camping information about each Scout camp across Ontario, with maps and photos of services available
 - ii) online reservations for camping
- c) developing opportunities to rent Scout properties to other organizations to increase revenue by offering our facilities to corporate clients as retreats, leadership training, and team bonding and supported by available team building programs that can be delivered with minimal effort.
- d) developing on-site program opportunities for visiting Scout groups, schools, and other organizations
- e) Reducing garbage output at all Scout Camps in Ontario by 50% by 2010 and by 90% by 2012 through the introduction of rigorous recycling and composting facilities

N.B.: This policy applies, with appropriate modification to all provinces.

Action Deadline

- ➔ Investigation to be complete by September 2010
- ➔ Implementation by September 2011

Person Responsible

- ➔ The Greater Toronto Council's Deputy Council Commissioner responsible for program
- ➔ The Ontario Incorporated Body

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of new staff, and cost of adventurous activities
- ➔ Cost of bus service
- ➔ Cost of new provincial camp website

Action Item #3.6

Reducing Barriers to Participation

We call on all Scouting bodies to adopt a policy to ensure:

- a) That leaders can attend meetings and training by offering babysitting, as needed.
- b) That meetings and training are close to public transit, where available, or, alternatively, that car-pooling/sharing is organized to ensure that everyone can attend, regardless of car ownership

Action Deadline

→ Policy to be adopted by September 2009

Person Responsible

→ Deputy Council Commissioners responsible for volunteer recruitment and development

Financial/Staff Implications

→ Cost of providing services, but should be revenue neutral if babysitting fees are collected to cover cost or through the use of volunteers.

ACTION ITEM#4

RE-BUILDING OUR IMAGE, PROFILE & EXPERTISE

WOSM Strategic Priority #4: Reaching Out - *breaking down barriers and working with broader segments of society. The aim of this strategic priority is to support NSOs in identifying and responding to the needs of young people, adults and society where Scouting is currently not having an impact. This should result in an increase in membership and increase Scouting's impact in the world today.*

WOSM Strategic Priority #7: Scouting's Profile - *strengthening communications, partnerships and resources. This strategic priority aims at strengthening Scouting's communications, partnerships and resources at all levels, as these are vital in supporting the work to achieve the mission.*

SC Strategic Direction #3: Strengthening Scouting's External Profile —
Build a positive image of Scouting through communications, partnerships community and corporate involvement.

Background

Many of the other action items deal with strengthening our profile, in a variety of different ways. This section focuses on building our profile from a media and public relations perspective.

The most important element, as discussed above, is web development. Jim Marggraff is the executive vice president for worldwide content for the educational toy company Leapfrog, one of the fastest growing toy companies in history. He has developed a seven-second rule. Essentially, the human attention span consists of seven second blocks.¹⁷ Any web experience must follow this rule.

Scouting suffers from a lack of "news" as the movement has long ago lost its novelty. Watch your nightly newscast. The reports either cover events that happened or they deal with the release of studies or information. This informational news is something easily generated and captures media attention because of an infatuation with facts and figures. The Scout Association has used this concept to great success in the UK, by focusing on childhood inactivity/obesity¹⁸ and volunteerism (the Morgan Report).¹⁹ The Girl Guides have also had success with such public awareness programs, focused on empowering young women.²⁰ The Scouting movement is in a unique position to leverage its experience, knowledge, and privileged access to a key demographic cohort.

¹⁷ Josh McHugh, "LeapFrog's Wild Ride", *Wired.com*,
http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.11/leapfrog_pr.html (accessed January 5, 2009).

¹⁸ See note 12, above. For news coverage see the BBC's coverage at
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7231930.stm

¹⁹ In December, 2007, a cross-party panel of British MPs, headed by Baroness Morgan of Huyton, launched the Morgan Inquiry to investigate young adult volunteering in the UK and why this group faces so many barriers to volunteering. The Inquiry was supported by the The Scout Association. See: www.morganinquiry.org.uk.

²⁰ See, for instance: http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/media_kit/news_releases/2004/girl_guides_award.cfm

Action Item #4.1

Web Development

We call for the:

- a) Immediate redesign and re-launch of Scouts Canada websites, with new content, video, downloads, social networking opportunities, web apps, and loyalty promotion tools aimed at young people
- b) Development of a Commissioner/leader password protected intranet, based on the Greater Toronto Council's proposed Commissioner's e-handbook
- c) Preparation of more video content for web and DVD (to be used at outreach events)
- d) Production of applications and micro-sites suitable for mobile phones (blackberry/iphone, etc)
- e) Production of camping "how-to" videos on various topics and post on Youtube, etc (how to light a stove, how to set up a tent, etc)
- f) Development of txting services, and greater utilization of social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter, and integration of all of these experiences with e-newsletters. Remember, email is effectively "old-fashioned" now.
- g) Development of online collaboration/mashing tools for Scouting (i.e. design your own Scout video)
- h) Promotion of Scoutface, Scouting's online social networking site
- i) Development of online, customizable badge recording and tracking programs

Alternatively, the Scouts Canada websites could remain much the same. A focused Scouting in Canada website, aimed at youth and young adults that would encompass these objectives, could be created instead.

We also recommend to Scouts Canada that current staff focus on newspaper, radio and television coverage be re-tasked to focus on the internet and new media opportunities.

Action Deadline

- ➔ By September 2009, new website is launched
- ➔ By September 2010, new videos launched

Person Responsible

- ➔ TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of contract staff person(s) to deliver web redesign coding, and other applications and produce video (may be one person or two persons depending on ability and cost)

Action Item #4.2

Youth Research & Advocacy Department

We call for an investigation into the funding of a public research and issues department to weigh in on issues related to youth. This would likely involve commissioning research and surveys and/or compiling existing research suitable for public disclosure.

Action Deadline

- Results of investigation released by September 2009
- Implementation of program by September 2010

Person Responsible

- TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

- Minimal for investigation
- Significant for implementation, as a staff person would likely have to be hired for
- coordination and report production

Action Item #4.3**Improving the Image of the Scout Uniform**

The idea of a uniform, at least in a formal sense, does not sit well with the digital generation, although most would embrace the egalitarian rationale for it. The current uniform is not necessarily bad but we propose that we examine ways to "relax" it. As any leader working with kids knows, it is virtually impossible to get a youth member to tuck in the shirt so, perhaps, we should have the shirts cut to allow for the uniform to be worn un-tucked? It could still be tucked in on formal occasions. A move away from formal uniforms has been very positive in the UK, with the de-emphasis on epaulets, tucking, and pleated shirt pockets. To save on cost, changes to the shirt can be minimized so that older shirts can be used until they are worn out.

We call for:

- a) An investigation, in cooperation with George Brown College's School of Fashion Studies, to make changes to the uniform, including changes to the cut, removal of pleats, and other elements to make the uniform more casual, along with cool branded non-uniform clothing options (t-shirts, hoodies, etc)
- b) An investigation of the entire badge system to ensure that:
 - (i) These images send the correct visual cues, and create a cohesive branding experience (too often badges are designed in isolation) in conjunction with uniform and other related materials
 - (ii) Group, Area, and Council badges be limited in size and colour to reduce cost burden on groups
 - (iii) All designs be vetted for insensitive depictions of Aboriginal people and Aboriginal culture or other inappropriate imagery.
- c) The encouragement of the "friendship knot" as a casual alternative to the woggle, as adopted by the UK Scout Association

Action Deadline

- Results of investigation released by September 2009
- Implementation of program by September 2010

Person Responsible

- TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

- Minimal for investigation, but increasing with cost of production

Action Item #4.4

Working with Government and other Funders

It is vitally important that Scouting identify and take advantage of government funding opportunities, along with those offered by other foundations and organizations.

The lack of a provincial council means that we are effectively shut out of government funding opportunities.

We call for the urgent:

- a) funding for the development of alternative non-governmental funding sources to grow Scouting's programs, camps and ScoutsAbout in all Scout Councils
- b) appointment of an Ontario provincial "point person" to aggressively pursue provincial government funding to expand ScoutsAbout and other program opportunities across the province.

Action Deadline

- ➔ By September, 2009, new funding identification and application under way
- ➔ By September 2010, provincial funding development under way

Person Responsible

- ➔ Greater Toronto Council and Scouts Canada's Ontario Incorporated Body

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Cost of staff to pursue funding opportunities

Action Item #4.5

Advertising and Multi-Media Outreach

An integral aspect of this entire plan, and the various outreach activities envisioned in it must be a coordinated multi-media experience; all of these activities serve to reinforce each other, and increase awareness of Scouting.

We call on Scouts Canada, the Greater Toronto Scout Foundation and other organizations such as Scouts Canada's Ontario Incorporated Body to partner and:

- a) retain top-level advertising and public relations firm(s)
- b) develop local, provincial, and national advertising strategy, including television and web ads (i.e. Google, Facebook, etc), and the creation of alternate web sites as needed
- c) Implement advertising strategy

Action Deadline

- ➔ By September, 2009, new advertising strategy developed
- ➔ By September 2010, advertising strategy implemented

Person Responsible

- ➔ Greater Toronto Scout Foundation, in cooperation with Scouts Canada's Ontario Incorporated Body and other funders

Financial/Staff Implications

- ➔ Significant in terms of strategy development and implementation

ACTION ITEM#5

BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

WOSM Strategic Priority #6: An Organisation for the 21st Century – *becoming flexible, lean, innovative, and participatory. This strategic priority aims at assisting NSOs as well as WOSM itself at world and regional levels, to adopt a strategic approach, reviewing their structures, systems and management to enable them to be sensitive to the changing needs of society and to respond quickly and effectively.*

SC Strategic Direction #7. Scouting - Canada's 21st Century Youth Organization — *Structures, systems and management organizationally accountable to members, sensitive to changing needs of society, and capable of quick response.*

Background

Open participation by all members is integral to our volunteer recruitment and management. There is a common misconception that Scouting's management is opaque and secretive, which breeds feelings of resentment and disengagement. We must work harder to make Scouting open, transparent and democratic; this will encourage people to join and remain members because they feel like they are "part of the team".

The World Organization of the Scouting Movement has noted:

Democracy is a condition for the development and the unity of the Scout Movement, because if active adult leaders are not involved in decision-making, they will not have the feeling to share a common purpose and they will be tempted to quit the Movement or to create dissident organizations.²¹

Studies have shown that the decline of membership based organizations and the rise of professionally managed organizations has led to a democratic deficit in American society.²²

World Scouting has just launched an extensive governance review. The WOSM Governance Review Task Force released its report in December, 2007, and it proposes a new democratic structure for World Scouting.²³

Furthermore, the best person for a particular job may not readily be apparent to the person making the appointment. It may not even be a current member of Scouts Canada. We must give up the notion that one "advances" in Scouting based on working with a section, working at the Area level, and onwards up the chain to the national level.

²¹ "Document 7: Governance of WOSM. 37th World Scout Conference" (Geneva: WOSM, 2005) at 5-6. Adopted as a reference document.

²² See Skocpol, above.

²³ The GRTF report can be downloaded from www.scout.org.

Action Item #5.1

Public Appointments Process

To often, job vacancies are filled, within Scouting, by “who you know” but that person may not, necessarily, be the best person for that job. The UK Scout Association has recently moved to a public appointments process.

We call on all Scout bodies to:

- a) Designate a deputy commissioner or staff person responsible for public appointments, in each level of Scouting, of committee members, group, area, council and executive commissioners, deputies and assistants.
- b) Determine such vacancies as may exist, from time to time and prepare job descriptions
- c) Post such vacancies on websites and other such websites (such as Charityvillage.com) and encourage members and non-members to apply
- d) Interview applicants and pick successful candidate as necessary

Action Deadline

→ Immediate implementation and ongoing review

Person Responsible

→ Commissioners at all levels

Financial/Staff Implications

→ minor implantation costs

Action Item #5.2

Addressing Democratic Deficit Concerns

To further encourage and increase democratic participation, and to address WOSM's call for greater democratic involvement, we call for the:

- a) Appointment a commission of persons, either members or not, to investigate the issue of democratic deficit concerns, and make recommendations to Scouts Canada for implementation to ensure an open, fair, and transparent election process and
- b) Encourage greater use of online election systems
- c) Encourage Scouts Canada to introduce a "one person-one vote" model for electing delegates where every member over the age of 15 is entitled to vote for delegates.

Action Deadline

→ immediate implementation, followed by ongoing review

Person Responsible

→ TBD

Financial/Staff Implications

→ minor implementation costs

Conclusion

The world is changing, and most observers agree that more change is coming and coming exponentially; these changes have many roots: environmental, social, economic, and generational. For Scouting to grow in our second century, we must be aware of these changes, respond to them, and harness them.

The issues that Scouting face are national and even international in scope and we can no longer afford, myopically, to hide behind territorial boundaries. We need holistic solutions.

This Action Plan is, then, a call to action for all of us, corporately and individually. We must all work together to ensure Scouting's continued preeminence as the world's leading youth movement. Join with us.

**Now is the time.
Right here. Right now.**