

How can your Pack have successful Lairs?

Take a moment to think of a successful team that you were on. The success of the team may not necessarily be measured by wins, but by the fun you had playing and learning together. The team was considered successful because the members knew how to work together, helped each other, maximized the individual strengths of its members, supported each other through losses and celebrated successes. It was an awesome feeling to be part of that kind of team.

How can the Cubs in your Pack discover that great feeling of teamwork?



The Cub Scout Team System has traditionally been known as the "Six," and is now known as the "Lair" to reflect the *Jungle Book* theme of the Section more clearly. Lairs are still made up of six to eight Cubs per group. The Scouter serves as a coach, supporting the members of the Lair as they form and perform on that team.

Using the Lair as the small group unit supports the development of the Cubs. It is a team size that allows the youth to work together easily. The Lair becomes a Cub Scout family, so that differences are accepted and appreciated. Ideas, comments and feedback are more easily shared with members of the Lair (as compared to the whole Pack, which can be intimidating). Lairs can pursue Adventures as a small team, or can bring ideas for Adventures to the whole Pack.

The younger members of each Lair learn from the older members. The older members learn to lead their Lairs. It's a supportive environment in which youth can share ideas and skills, make plans and have Adventures! It's also a safe environment for mistakes—which is part of learning by doing.

The Canadian Path envisions a program that is a logical progression from one Section to the next, with each providing more opportunities for youth leadership than the Section before. In this spirit, it is appropriate for Scouters to do their best to make up Lairs early in the Scouting year that will hopefully work for the Pack. The Pack's Lairs should be more or less equal in size and in their share of the Pack's Runners, Trackers and Howlers

(the first-year, second-year and third-year Cubs, respectively). The Howlers are the leaders of the Lair, as Sixers formerly led Sixes. However, Lairs are led collectively by their Howlers, and not by a single Cub.

The Trackers support the Howlers (like Seconders), mentoring the Runners. Scouters need to choose the Lairs with a mind to friendships, family relationships and overall chemistry.

As the Scouting Year progresses, there may be some friction from time to time within a Lair. These should be seen as opportunities to learn about problem-solving and relationship-building. However, it may be for the best of the Pack to make changes to the Lairs from time to time throughout the Scouting Year. If and when this time comes, these changes should be led by the Howlers' Council—the Pack leadership team made up of the senior Cubs. This is a great opportunity for Cubs to learn about team dynamics and fairness.

At the end of the Scouting Year, take some time as Lairs and as a Pack to review how the various Lairs got along. This will give the Cubs a chance to learn from the other Lairs in the Pack. The lessons they take away will be useful in the next Scouting Year, whether it's as members of the Pack or as new Scouts.