



The Promise and Law

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What are rules? Promises and laws for age sections.

- 29 rules to follow!
- Different laws and promises for each age section?

29 RULES TO FOLLOW!

Q - Unfortunately a new Akela has taken over our Cub pack, and seems to have little respect for the boys therefore creating no respect for herself from the boys or parents.

Last night our sons produced a copy letter complaining about uniform and behaviour with a list of 29 rules to follow. Unfortunately these rules go from the sublime to the ridiculous, for example: Don't make silly noises.

Please inform me what the behavioural policy is of the Scout organisation or who I should discuss the growing problem with?

A - I belong to the World Scout Bureau, the headquarters of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. Therefore, it is difficult for me to give you precise information on the rules of your particular association. You should contact your national headquarters directly about this.

However, in my view, a Cub Scout leader who defines 29 rules for the pack does not understand the educational approach of Scouting very well.

Educating children to understand and to respect a rule is a very important educational objective. The best way for that is to propose to the Cubs to decide themselves what the collective rules should be, based on a regular evaluation of the group life (Akela can of course help and make proposals).

Sometimes, we should read again what Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement wrote: "Education must be positive, not negative - active, not passive. For example, the Scout law in each of its details says: A Scout does this, that, or the other. Authorities have come along to improve the Scout Law, and not recognising the active side of it, have changed it to the reverse - a series of Don'ts. Don't, of course, is the distinguishing feature and motto of the old-fashioned system of repression, and is a red rag to a boy. It is a challenge to him to do wrong." (HQG, January 1916).

Maybe, you should try to have a discussion with your Akela, with some other parents, and try to help her understand that she should revise her approach.

DIFFERENT LAWS AND PROMISES FOR EACH AGE SECTION?

Q -I work with Explorers (15-18 years old) and I have a "small" but very important question for you: do the Explorers who gave their promise while they were Scouts (11-14 years old) need to give it again now as explorers? Here we have different laws and promises for each branch / age section.

A - In my view, it is important that the Law and Promise are adapted to each age range. It would be stupid to ask adolescents to make the Cub Scout's promise.

Then, I think that even if your Explorers made a promise when they were Scouts, it is important to ask them to do their Explorer's Promise. They are older, more mature, they should be able to have a deeper understanding of Scout values.

Of course, you have to explain that to them so that they understand that they are not being asked to do the same thing twice.

In the Leaders toolbox, read "Understanding the Scout Law and Promise"