

June 2026 — Designing a Year Families Want to Return To

Your pack calendar is easy to fill. Pinewood Derby, Blue and Gold, a campout or two, and pack meetings every month. The harder question is whether the year you are building is one your families will want to come back to. These are the ideas from this session worth bringing into your planning conversation.

Pack operating rhythm

Ask a parent who joined your pack three months ago to describe how it works. When dens meet, where information comes from, and what happens at a pack meeting. If their answer would surprise you, that gap is worth closing before fall recruiting brings in a new wave of families who have to figure it out the same way.

Communication

Most packs have settled on a primary communication tool, or think they have. Band, GroupMe, Scoutbook, email. The question worth asking is whether your newest families know which one to watch. Experienced families figured it out. New families usually did not get told.

Learn More: [Communication Tools for Units](#)

Five Signature Experiences

Before your planning meeting, ask your leadership team to name the five experiences families in your pack would miss most if the pack disappeared. Not events on a calendar. Experiences families talk about afterward.

A parent at the session described her son's first campout, a dads-only trip where the kids ate cheese puffs for breakfast instead of real food. That story still gets told in her family. Nobody remembers the date.

When you have your five, the follow-on question is what has to be true about how those events are run for a family to walk away with a story worth retelling. That question produces better planning decisions than a blank calendar grid.

Parent connections

Scouts arrive with names. Adults arrive as somebody's mom or dad. In a lot of packs, they stay that way for years, which means when a family gets busy or loses momentum, there's nothing holding them except their Scout's enthusiasm.

When parents have friends in the pack, the dynamic is different. A mom's group or a regular informal gathering outside the meeting schedule gives adults a chance to become people to each other before anyone asks them to volunteer for anything.

The workbook

The Pack Program Planning Workbook was the primary resource for this session. Find it in the [Annual Program Planning Guide](#) alongside guidance on timing, who to include, and how to run the meeting.

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