

The VENTURING Program For Religious Organizations



VENTURING · BSA

WHAT IS VENTURING?



- ◆ Venturing is the young adult division of the Boy Scouts of America for young men and women ages 14–20 (who have completed the eighth grade).
- ◆ Venturing's purpose is to provide positive experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.
- ◆ The Venturing program has been tailored to help religious youth groups achieve their aims and purposes by providing leadership training, outdoor and high-adventure activity, program ideas, recognition for the youth, audiovisuals, literature, and insurance.
- ◆ A Venturing program is owned by the religious organization. The religious organization selects and approves adult leadership. The religious organization uses elements of the Venturing program to help achieve its specific aims and purposes related to young adults.

EVERYONE WINS WITH VENTURING



- ◆ The religious organization wins:
 - Venturing will work with any existing youth program structure. It does not require starting another program. Any youth group can incorporate Venturing into its program.
 - Venturing will help keep your youth closer to your organization's beliefs and expectations and connected to the right people.
 - Venturing provides a "package" (wholesome, fun activities and recognition) that you can use to hold on to your existing youth and to attract new youth into your religious organization.
 - Venturing in your youth group will help display your faith's role in the welfare of the community.
 - The religious awards program will help create an arena in which young adults can interact with religious leaders.
- ◆ The adult volunteers win:
 - Volunteers receive specific program suggestions that can be tailored to the needs of the youth group.
 - Opportunity for greater community involvement is provided.
 - Communication, planning, and program development skills are enhanced.
 - A greater commitment to service results.
- ◆ The youth win:
 - Venturing stimulates youth interest in wholesome, fun activities sponsored by the religious organization, and can strengthen their commitment to the organization.
 - In Venturing, youth are taught hands-on leadership skills like planning, listening, teamwork, communication, and delegation.
 - Venturing's awards and achievements help youth feel recognized, give them a sense of belonging, and build self-esteem.

VENTURING RESOURCES



- ◆ Access to local BSA camp property for religious retreats and team building
- ◆ Professional guidance:
 - How to organize the group
 - How to recruit new youth
 - Connections with other youth groups
 - How to conduct an annual planning meeting
 - Help planning and tailoring your program to achieve your aims
- ◆ Liability and accident insurance
- ◆ Venturing Leadership Skills Course for all members
- ◆ Training for adult volunteers
- ◆ Youth protection training videotape for youth and adults
- ◆ Fast Start videotape for new leaders
- ◆ Program helps:
 - Youth Ministries Bronze Award
 - Gold Award
 - Silver Award
 - Ranger Award
 - *Venturing Leader Manual*
 - Start-up orientation
- ◆ Service projects to benefit the religious organization

GETTING STARTED



- ◆ **Secure a commitment from the head of the religious organization.**

- ◆ **Call a briefing meeting of key organization members.**

The organization head calls a meeting of key members in the organization with a Venturing representative from the BSA local council in attendance. The Venturing representative can

- Explain how Venturing works within the framework of the religious organization
- Determine the market for Venturing within the organization
- Describe adult leader roles and responsibilities; discuss prospects to fill adult leadership positions
- Help identify a key adult to serve as the chartered organization representative—a liaison between the religious organization and the Venturing crew (youth group)
- Identify program support and methods

- ◆ **Conduct planning and training meetings.**

Your Venturing crew committee and Advisors meet with a Venturing representative to

- View the *Briefing the Organizing Committee* videotape, AV-03V012
- Plan the first programs
- Set the open house date
- Review *New Crew Start-Up Orientation*, No. 25-878, and determine when to conduct the program capability inventory with adults and the activity interest survey with youth

- ◆ **Promote attendance at open house**

Members compile a list of five friends each to invite to an open house.

A telephone follow-up should be conducted by the committee two days before the open house to all members and prospects.

Confirm open house arrangements and print the outline of the crew's planned program to distribute at the open house.

- ◆ **Conduct the open house.**

Follow the suggested open house agenda on page 34 of the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655A.

Distribute the crew's planned program to youth and parents.

ONE YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A VENTURER . . .



The Boy Scouts of America recently invited the Louis Harris and Associates, Inc. organization to conduct a poll to scientifically answer the question, "What is it about the BSA programs that leads to positive outcomes?"

The poll identified Six Critical Elements of Healthy Youth Development. The poll results as they relate to high school-age youth (Venturers) are as follows:

1. **Strong personal values and character**

Seventy-nine percent of Venturers polled said Venturing gave them opportunities to practice ethical decision making.

2. **A positive sense of self-worth and usefulness**

Eighty-nine percent of Venturers agreed that being a Venturer has taught them to have more confidence in themselves and their abilities.

Eighty-nine percent agreed with the statement, "The activities in Venturing help you prepare for the future."

3. **Caring, nurturing relationship with parents, other adults, and peers**

Ninety-one percent of Venturers agreed that they can talk to their Advisors about important issues.

Ninety-six percent agreed that they have made new friends in Venturing.

4. **A desire to learn**

Sixty-five percent of Venturers agreed that Venturing gives them a chance to do things and go places that they would not otherwise experience.

5. **Productive/creative use of time**

Fifty-six percent of Venturers agreed that during a typical three-month period, they participated in a service project.

6. **Social adeptness**

Ninety-two percent agreed with the statements, "You learned to get along with people who are different from yourself," and, "You learned something about how to be a team player and work in a group."

In a typical three-month period, Venturers responded:

- ◆ Eighty-seven percent participate in a group vote or decision.
- ◆ Eighty-three percent resolve conflicts with peers.
- ◆ Sixty-eight percent participated in a Venturing outdoor activity.
- ◆ Forty-two percent have talked with professionals or experts in a specialized field.
- ◆ Forty-one percent have learned about a potential career field.

YOUTH MINISTRIES BRONZE AWARD AND RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS



The following is a sampling of the requirements for the Youth Ministries Bronze Award:

- ◆ Earn your denomination's Venturing-age religious award.
- ◆ Plan and lead a service project such as helping to build a Habitat for Humanity house, participating in a community cleanup project, or taking on a fix-up project for a nursing home or nursery.
- ◆ Serve as a volunteer in your religious organization or another nonprofit organization for at least three months.
- ◆ Go on a religious retreat or religious trek lasting at least two days.
- ◆ Produce or be a cast member in some type of entertainment production with a religious or ethical theme, such as a play, puppet show, or concert for a group such as a children's group, retirement home, homeless shelter, etc.

Venturing Religious Emblems

Religious emblems are owned by the specific denominations and are authorized by the Religious Relationships Committee, BSA. The following denominations currently offer religious emblems for Venturers:

Armenian Apostolic Church of America	Hindu
Armenian Church of America	Islamic
Baha'i	Jewish
Baptist	Lutheran
Buddhist	Meher Baba
Catholic, Eastern	Moravian
Catholic, Roman	Polish National Catholic
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Protestant
Churches of Christ	Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Eastern Orthodox	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Episcopal	The Salvation Army
First Church of Christ, Scientist	United Church of Christ
General Church of the New Jerusalem	United Methodist
	Zoroastrian

For more information about the religious emblems, contact your local Boy Scouts of America council office or P.R.A.Y.



Q. If my religious organization starts a Venturing program, how much ownership and flexibility will I have in the program?

Since 1910 the Boy Scouts of America has partnered with religious and community organizations in a unique arrangement.

The local council of the Boy Scout organization provides

- ◆ Proven and tested program suggestions for young people
- ◆ Professional consulting and organization services to assist the religious organization
- ◆ Camping property available for all affiliated groups
- ◆ General liability insurance and low-cost accident insurance

The religious organization maintains ownership of the following:

- ◆ Approving and selecting the adult leadership
- ◆ Providing the meeting place
- ◆ Determining how the program will be administered to meet its specific aims and purposes

Q. What are the advantages of combining my religious organization's youth group with Venturing?

- ◆ The Venturing program provides program ideas and resources that will enhance your existing group's program.
- ◆ An enhanced youth group program can help retain your high school-age youth and attract new youth to your organization. It could bring youth and their families into your organization.
- ◆ You can weave your specific religious instruction or expectations in with the fun activities of Venturing.
- ◆ Working with the Boy Scouts of America, you will discover a wealth of resources: other youth groups in your area, successful fund-raisers, access to camping and retreat properties, leadership training for your adult and youth leaders, literature, and program resources.

Q. How much does it cost to create a Venturing crew with my religious youth group?

- ◆ Twenty-dollar annual charter fee (provides general liability insurance coverage to all registered members, leaders, and your religious organization)
- ◆ Seven-dollar annual fee per adult leader (minimum of four)
- ◆ Seven-dollar annual fee per youth (minimum of five)

Q. Is a uniform required?

A uniform is not required in Venturing. There is an optional Venturing uniform available. Many Venturing crews create their own T-shirt or other way of identifying themselves with the group.

Q. Where will we find the leadership?

Venturing provides an adult survey form that can be used to survey members of your religious organization. It can help identify adult volunteers to serve as Advisors, program consultants, and helpers with transportation, chaperoning, counseling, and planning. In addition, your local Venturing representative can assist you in a process of prospecting and recruitment that can help identify leadership.

Q. Will Venturing compete with my youth group?

The Venturing program is designed to complement and enhance your existing group. You choose the elements of Venturing that best complement your program. It is designed to be flexible and fit within the framework you have created. If you don't have a youth group, it creates a framework to build on.

Q. How do we get started?

Contact your local Boy Scouts of America office in the white pages of your phone book. Ask to speak with a unit-serving executive in your area about Venturing.