

Ladder of Youth Leadership in Scouting

	HOW IT WORKS	RESULTS	WHEN TO USE	
1	Scouts lead, determine content and direction. <i>Adults maintain only provisional authority in matters of safety and propriety.</i>	Scouts gain very advanced leadership skills with independent authority to determine direction.	Mature Scout leadership. <i>Adults observe and may or may not be consulted about direction and content.</i>	
2	Scouts in positions of authority but close adult oversight. <i>Adults maintain the authority to coerce, veto or otherwise control decisions.</i>	Scouts learn advanced leadership skills, growing sense of independence more mature judgment and responsibility.	Applicable where Scouts are developing their own activities yet adult facilitation is required.	
3	Scouts and adults have shared authority, responsibility and share the determination of content and direction.	Scouts share leadership on equal terms with adults.	Warranted in situations where adults and Scouts participate as equals.	
4	Scout leadership provisional Adult planned.	Scouts learn intermediate leadership skills. Scouts may have more substantial impact on adult-driven decisions or activities.	Warranted where leadership capacity is developing such as mentoring young leaders.	
5	Adult Dictated Limited Scout Leadership	Adults determine most direction and content. Scouts lead as directed but have little to do with determining content or direction.	Scouts gain elementary leadership skills.	Warranted as leadership capacity is developing. Limited usefulness in mentoring young leaders.
6	Adults plan and lead. Scout leadership roles are decorative	Adults determine the content, direction, lead and maintain full authority. Scouts occasionally have inconsequential leadership roles.	Scouts may gain some basic practice in social skills and initial lessons in leadership.	Warranted when introducing basic concepts of leadership. <i>May be used to create the perception that Scouts are leading when they aren't.</i>
7	Adults plan and lead. Scouts participate voluntarily.	Adults set direction, lead and facilitate. Scouts have no leadership role.	Scouts have greater investment and engagement in the program.	Appropriate for youngest Scouts.
8	Adults plan and lead. Scouts required to participate.	Adults set direction, lead and facilitate. Scouts have no leadership role.	Scouts participate because they have to. <i>Scouts may have little or no investment or interest in program.</i>	Rarely or never.

Youth leadership is not an on-off switch. Being youth-led does not mean adults just kind of sit there and can't have no influence or input at all, or that adults lead without Scouts having influence or input. The levels of youth and adult leadership fluctuate according to the experience the people involved and the demands of the situation; it's simplistic to say that we want to reach the top rung and stay there all the time. Our aim is the top rung but we move up and down the ladder to get the job done.

