



FACT SHEET

Scouting in the Buddhist Community

Overview

Scouting serves an important role in youth development in the Buddhist community. Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Varsity Scout teams, and Venturing crews chartered to Buddhist organizations can be found throughout the United States. Scouts can participate within units chartered to Buddhist organizations or as members of units chartered to other organizations.

Buddhist youth have participated in Scouting for more than 80 years. Since 1920, with the formation of Troop 4 by the Fresno Buddhist Church, young Buddhists in America have enjoyed the benefits of Scouting.

Organization

The Buddhist Churches of America administers the religious emblems program for all Buddhist denominations in America. Founded in 1899, the Buddhist Churches of America is affiliated with Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan. The Buddhist Churches of America National Committee on Scouting works with the religious leaders of the Buddhist community to develop the Buddhist religious program.

The National Buddhist Committee on Scouting works closely with the religious relationships director of the Boy Scouts of America to promote a harmonious relationship between all religious denominations and organizations.

Religious Emblems

Any registered Scout who has fulfilled all of the requirements for the Metta emblem or Sangha emblem can receive the recognition appropriate to his course of study.

Metta Emblem. *Metta* is a Buddhist term meaning loving kindness and goodwill. This word was selected as the name for the Cub Scout religious emblem with the hope of nurturing boys to relate to all things with loving kindness and goodwill.

Sangha Emblem. *Sangha* means Buddhist brotherhood. The Sangha emblem program gives the Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Venturer practical guidance in achieving the spiritual pledge made in the Scout Oath and Law, through the application of Buddhist teachings. The program teaches the basic tenets of Buddhism as they relate to the activities of daily life. The program stresses the importance of both harmonious relationships and the universal brotherhood of all living beings.

The Goal of Buddhism

The goal of all Buddhists is enlightenment through understanding of the reasons and causes of suffering. Awareness of impermanence and of oneself and compassion toward others are basic and essential elements of Buddhism.

Buddhist Practices

The fundamental doctrine of Buddhism is the Four Noble Truths, which are:

- Noble Truth of Suffering
- Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering
- Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering
- Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Cessation of Suffering

The last of the Four Noble Truths is also referred to as the Noble Eightfold Path, which is another basic foundation of Buddhism.

The Noble Eightfold Path is the practice of

- Right Views
- Right Thoughts
- Right Speech
- Right Conduct
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Meditation

For more information, contact your local Buddhist temple or write the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting, Buddhist Churches of America, 701 East Thrift Ave., Kingsland, GA 31548-5222; phone 912-729-6323; fax 912-729-1699; e-mail bcascout@eagnet.com; Web page: www.eagnet.com/edipage/areaserv/nbcs/home.htm

Hawaii office: Homba Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, 1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, HI 96813; phone 808-522-9200.