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| **Why do kids misbehave?**from Bill Smith's ["Boy Behavior for Cub Scout Leaders"](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html)<http://rt492.org/dl/behavior.html> |
| **They are not sure what is expected of them.** | Use [code of conduct.](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html#CODE) Make sure that each boy and his parents are aware of the rules. Wearing uniforms, emphasizing the Cub Scout motto and promise all help. |
| **They test limits.** | Do you really mean it? Be consistent and fair. Expect to be tested at every meeting. Be good natured about enforcing the rules. Use gimmicks like the [conduct candle](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html#candles) or marble jar. |
| **They are bored.** | [Activities](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html#ACTIVITIES#ACTIVITIES) should be active. **Meetings should be well planned**, with lots of short, fun filled items. If something isn't working, switch to plan B. Keep it simple, make it fun. |
| **They want attention.** | Give them attention. Use lots of [positive statements](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html#POSITIVE) every meeting. Make sure that each boy gets his chance to shine. Know and use each boy's name. Have several assistants so each boy gets lots of attention. |
| **They try to dominate.** | Give them opportunities to control. They should have lots of input to the den code of conduct, the skits they put on at pack meetings, and other activities. Encourage Bear Achievements 15 and 24 at den meetings. Try to be a facilitator rather than a leader.  This will also help them as Webelos & Boy Scouts |
| **They are lonely.** | Watch out for cliques **(a big No! No!)** and little sets that exclude one or more boys. ***Every boy is welcome and is important in the Pack! Keep a watchful eye on boys making fun of others.  That is not the Cub Scout Way. Stop it immediately!*** Keep den size small so that a quiet shy kid doesn't get overlooked. Use [positive statements](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/behavior.html#POSITIVE) and encourage boys to give good will to each other. Encourage Bear Achievement 24d. |
| **They need acceptance** | Use ceremonies to build each boy's self image. Use den cheers, [den doodles](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/denprog.html#DOODLES), hi-5's etc. to recognize achievement and to build team spirit in the den. Make a den flag with each boy's name on it. Use Tiger elective 9 to welcome new members. |
| **They want to lead** | Let them!  Give every boy the chance to lead, and support him when he does. Use the offices of [denner and assistant denner,](http://www.wtsmith.com/rt/denprog.html#DENNER) have boys lead ceremonies, games and other activities. Use Wolf Achievement 2b, and Bear Achievements 15a, 15c, 24b and 24c  as opportunities.  This will also help them as Webelos & Boy Scouts |
| **They seek revenge.** |  Abused or hurt children may lash out - not at their abusers - but at someone they see as vulnerable. You need outside help in this case. |

**10 COMMANDMENTS OF DEN CONTROL**

1. Regularly use the Cub Scout Ideals: the Motto, the Promise and Law of the Pack, in ceremonies, and as a guide to conduct. You must set the example.
2. Use Den Rules. Start using them immediately. Boys need to know what is expected of them. Make sure both boys and parents know what the rules are.
3. Make uniforms important. Have regular uniform inspections and instill pride in wearing their uniforms. Boys behave differently when they dress up.
4. Be firm, fair and consistent. They will test you from time to time to make sure that you really mean it.
5. Use positive incentives. When the conduct candle burns down or the marble jar is full, give them the special party or outing you promised.
6. Make each boy feel special. Use warm greetings, compliments, words of praise, and fond farewells, liberally for each boy. Make them feel appreciated and wanted.
7. Boys must have input to rules. If you want them to cooperate they should feel that they have some control of how the den operates. You empower them and teach responsibility when they help set the rules.
8. Den programs must be full of short, fun activities. Boys at this age are active and quickly become bored or frustrated. Long talking sessions and complicated craft projects make it difficult to keep control of the meeting.
9. Use lots of help. From time to time, boys require individual attention. They will need help, encouragement, reassurance, advice or just want to tell you something important. You can't give them that attention if your doing it alone.
10. Get to know each boy. Every boy in your den is a unique individual with his own dreams, fears, and sense of humor. He needs to know that you care about him.

**DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT**

Discipline is the process of learning.

Den discipline is a cooperative process where the boys behave in such a manner that both the boys and the leaders win: both achieve their objectives. The boys have fun, do exciting new things and feel good about themselves. The leaders achieve the aims of scouting, the boys are safe and they all get through the meetings with a minimum of damage and tears.

Punishment is the opposite.

Punishment happens when discipline fails. Punishment is adversarial: either the leader wins, the boy is punished and the boy loses or the leader backs down and the boy wins.

Children need to develop self-esteem. They need to win and feel good about themselves. When a leader uses punishment or the threat of punishment to control behavior, every time the leader wins, the boy loses and is motivated to misbehave in an attempt to win next time.

Scouting relies totally on positive reinforcement. Chapter 16 (Ch. 2 in the older edition) of the Cub Scout Leader Book contains the official word on Cub Scout discipline. Every leader should read it and follow its recommendations.