

Troop 137 Cell Phone Policy

- **Scouts are not permitted to bring a cell phone to camp.**
- ***If a scout is found with a cell phone (regardless of whose phone it is), he will be not be allowed to participate in the next camping trip.***

Cell phones are now a common accessory and many parents equip their children with them for what they feel are safety and/or convenience reasons. However, while the scouts are at camp, the adult leaders are responsible for the safety of the youth under their charge.

If a scout's cell phone is found, it will be confiscated by the adult staff and returned for the trip home so the scout may contact his parents for pickup.

If a parent has serious concerns about his/her child having a cell phone and access to it, then the parent should contact the Scoutmaster to discuss any concerns. If the child has special needs, then special arrangements may be made to accommodate those needs.

Why do we have this policy?

- The scouts are involved in scouting to experience the unique outdoor adventures made available to them through scouting. It is a chance to unplug from the rest of the world and commune with nature and their fellow scouts.
- Cell phones can be easily damaged or lost at camp.
- Mischief with cell phones is unavoidable. Prank calls or "borrowing" other scouts phones, or other un-scoutlike behavior can and has occurred. It is an almost irresistible temptation for boys at this age.
- Contrary to what you might expect, calling home causes homesickness or makes it worse. It does not relieve it. All of our summer camp adult leaders can attest to this fact! A call home will only make him miss you more.
- Well meaning scouts often cause panicked parents. A scout calling home and saying that his friend Johnny is "REALLY sick" will cause a chain of frantic phone calls to Johnny's mother to advise her of his condition. This then puts her in a panic when Johnny simply had an upset stomach (homesick) when he got to camp and is perfectly fine.

All of our adult leaders do carry cell phones. They are typically reachable by the parents in an **emergency** situation (where cell phone service is not available, every camp has a contact phone number). In addition, at camps where activities require the entire group to separate into smaller groups, 2-way radios are also used to keep in constant communication. Cell phones are NEVER needed by the boys.

Should you contact the scoutmaster or other adult leaders at camp to find out "*how my son is doing?*". No. This takes our time away from the 30-40 other youth who we are there to oversee. Your son is doing just fine. He will see you on Sunday and tell you stories of the adventures he had. Let him be on his own (under supervision of course), and experience what scouting is all about. If there is an emergency, we will certainly contact you.

If you choose send him with a cell phone, instruct your child to either leave it in the car, or turn it into an adult leader or driver for safe keeping until the return trip.

Parents, we need YOU to help enforce this.