

Health and safety is right in the middle of everything we do. Health knowledge and safety skills are an essential part of Scouting's program. The work of the Health and Safety Committee is vitally important in the Council program—it touches every part of it.

The stated purposes of our Scouting program are "character development, citizenship training and physical fitness." To the degree that being "physically strong and mentally awake" is essential to successful living, our work in health and safety is basic to our whole program.

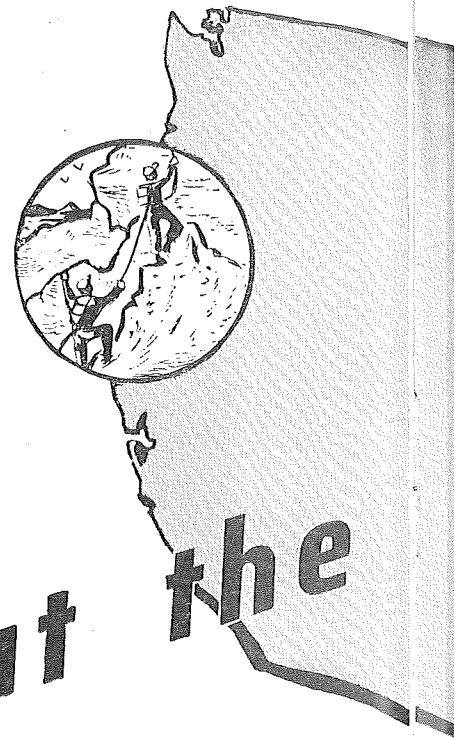
Accordingly, the Health and Safety Committee has a clear responsibility to see to it that a thorough job of training boys in health and safety is done at every age level in our program. We cannot afford to limit ourselves to just the protective part of our job. It is important, of course, to make sure that Council camps are properly inspected and guarded against the various health and safety hazards. We dare not fail there. But the task of safeguarding a Scout for the week he is in the Council camp, important as it is, is only a drop in the bucket compared with the opportunity we have to train that Scout, fifty-two weeks in the year, in the knowledge, skills and habits which will bring him to strong, stalwart manhood.

So the first and most important job of every Council Health and Safety Committee is to develop a year-round program of health and safety training which will reach down through the Unit to every boy in the Council membership.

The whole field of Scout training involves us. Everything a boy does has health and safety aspects. Safety in the home, on the highway, safety while at work or play — safety is always important. A bicycle-safety program, put on with the cooperation of local police departments and newspapers, is a good example of the opportunity we have to teach safety in everyday activities. It not only relates to a boy-activity which is full of hazards unless proper safety habits and skills are learned, but it illustrates how easy it is to recruit help for such a training program. Firearms-safety is a similar opportunity. Local Rifle Clubs (NRA), local and state police, National Guard units, sportsmen's groups and others will gladly cooperate. For training in first aid and fire safety we can make available the resources of the Red Cross, fire and police departments, utility company groups and others.

All Scout skills involve safety. Swimming, boating and canoeing, fire-building, cooking, knife-and-axe, hiking, all call for the teaching of safe methods. And what an opportunity, not only for health and safety teaching, but also for practice in wholesome community living comes with common camp problems of food-storage, dishwashing, garbage-disposal, water-supply and latrines.

And the opportunity goes beyond that, for a Scout



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The job of the Health and Safety Committee is more than a few preventive measures. It is a vital and pervasive part of everything we do. It affects our entire program. It is, in a very real sense, "at the heart of Scouting."

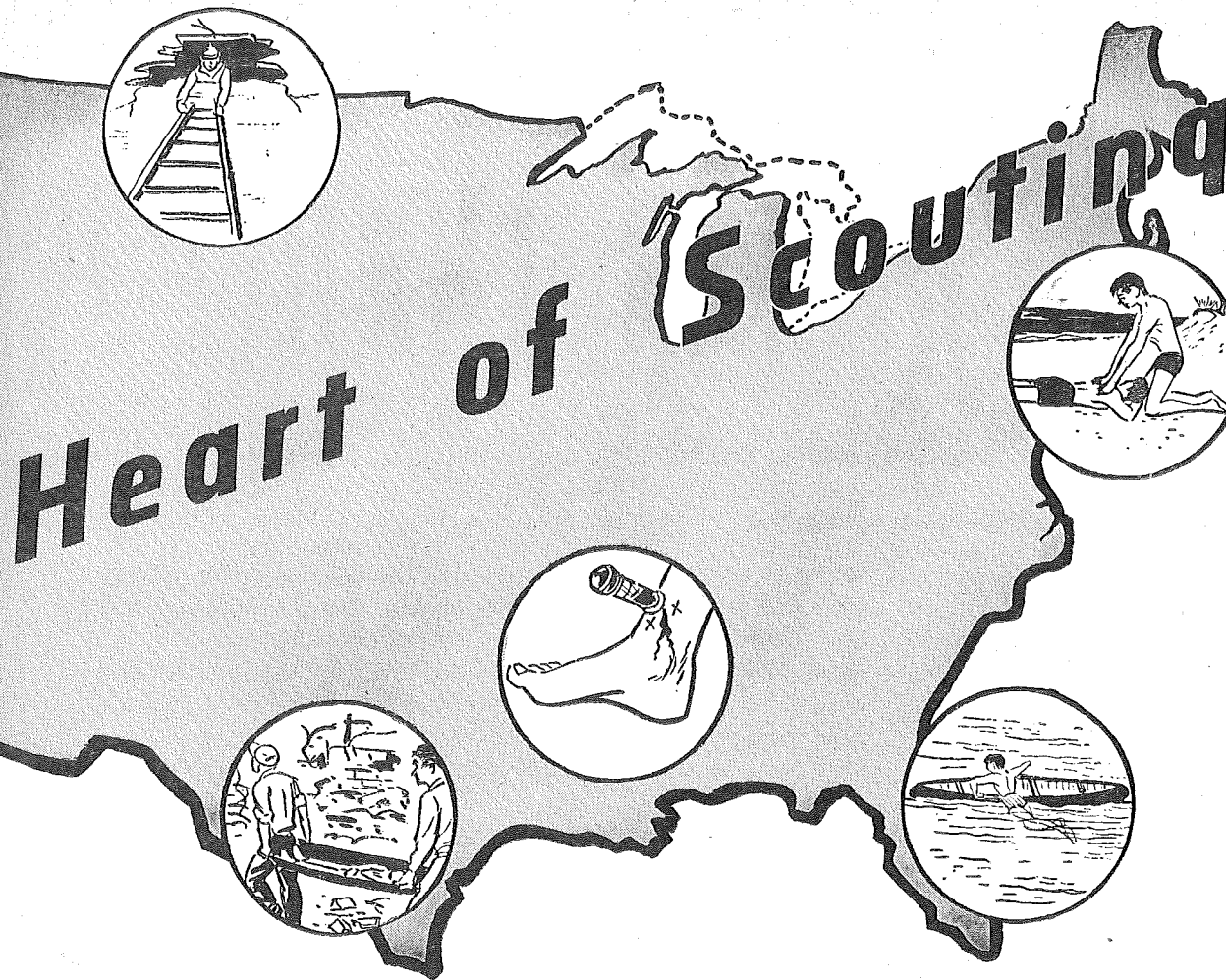
promises to keep himself physically strong, and mentally awake — and we have the chance to help build a boy's basic philosophy of clean, vigorous, healthy living. "He keeps clean in body and thought, stands for clean speech, clean sports, clean habits, and travels with a clean crowd," reads the eleventh point of the Scout Law. It is our privilege to help boys live up to that ideal.

The whole concept of personal fitness falls within our jurisdiction. We need to help every boy to interpret our motto "Be Prepared," not only in terms of skills, such as first aid, but also in terms of physical and mental development, of muscle and speed, of coordination and reaction time, of manly health and strength to cope with the problems of manhood.

The major job of the Health and Safety Committee, then, is to formulate and carry out such a program of training. That program must meet at least three requirements:

1. It must meet local needs and utilize local resources. In Florida, water and boating safety, but not much about mountain climbing. In Colorado, the other way around. In Minnesota, lots about frost-bite and ice rescues, little about poisonous snakes. In some of our southern states, the reverse.

2. It must be fun for the boy. It must be built into



the game of Scouting, which attracts and holds boys. We must never assume that because health and safety is so important we can permit the teaching of it to become dry and tedious. On the contrary, just because it *is* so important, we must be doubly sure to employ such intriguing teaching methods that no boy can fail to learn. Games and contests can make the subject come alive.

3. It must serve boys through Unit leaders. Health and safety must not be an extra dosage, administered occasionally by a Health and Safety Committee sponsored activity. It must be a vital part of the regular program of Pack, Troop, and Explorer Unit, stimulated and implemented by the continuous help of an alert and active Health and Safety Committee.

Our committee has a responsibility for training Cub Scouts as well as Boy Scouts and Explorers. Training in health and safety starts with the Wolf Cub and carries right through. Physical development, health habits, encouragement of a yearly medical exam, and safety rules are some of the steps in the Cub Scout program. The building of a healthy body, establishing of good health habits, and acquiring of safety skills, these factors are common to all three phases of the total Scout program, and our committee is properly concerned to make sure that a quality job is done all along the line.

Recruiting a top-flight committee is not difficult, because the experts whose help we need, the medical doctors, Public Health and Red Cross people, experts from fire and police departments, public service companies are all health and safety conscious and eager to help.

Another fundamental in Scouting is the ideal of service to others, and here again we are directly involved. A Scout "is prepared" to be helpful — prepared not only in attitude but in skills. His knowledge of first aid, of life saving, of artificial respiration, of other health and safety skills enables him to save life or help those in danger or distress.

Nor does his obligation end with the things he does as an individual. His Troop or Explorer Unit stands ready to serve as a group in any emergency such as fire, flood, tornado or other disaster, in cooperation with the Red Cross, with local officials such as the police and fire departments, and with Civil Defense authorities.

It is clear, then, that at every turn our committee is involved. Scouting serves America as it trains young men for successful living and effective citizenship. Personal fitness, physical and mental, is basic to such living and such citizenship, and therefore basic to our whole Scout program of training. This is our opportunity and our responsibility as members of the Health and Safety Committee. *END.*