



## Frequently Asked Questions about Special Needs and Scouting

\*\*\* Adult Leaders' Edition \*\*\*



Here are answers to questions adult leaders often ask about special needs and the programs of Scouting Colorado. For continued access to current information, bookmark this page, which you can reach using the QR code to the right or at [ScoutingColorado.info/SNFAQL](https://ScoutingColorado.info/SNFAQL).



### ***Why does an adult leader need to know about special needs?***

Studies [such as this one](#) show that one youth in four has special needs. That tells us that a typical Scouting unit contains multiple members who have such needs. Meeting those needs may require many things: dispensing drugs; dealing appropriately with ADHD or autistic spectrum disorders; arranging advancement accommodations; promoting disabilities awareness; preventing bullying; and so on. It's best to learn about your youths' needs early on, starting with a [joining conference](#), and be prepared to address them as need arises.

### ***Where can I find information about special needs and how they fit in with Scouting?***

[The Inclusion Toolbox](#) provides comprehensive guidelines regarding special needs and Scouting. It starts with basics such as the roles of [unit](#)

[leaders](#) and [parents](#), and progresses to more specialized topics, for example, how to navigate advancement requirements.

[ScoutingColorado.info/SpecialNeeds](https://ScoutingColorado.info/SpecialNeeds), our home page, points you to resources at our council and in our vicinity.

Scouting America's [Special Needs and Disabilities page](#) provides extensive resources that include official guidelines, training bundles and webinars.

***What are some good ways to educate myself and my unit about special needs?***

[Please see our training page.](#)

***Scouting has many rules about the ages at which youths can participate and the criteria for advancement. Are these hard and fast or can we make accommodations?***

Scouting America policies allow certain accommodations for special needs, including the age of participation in various programs. The member may establish an [Individual Scout Advancement Plan](#) analogous to the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) of public schools. A youth never "gets a pass" on a requirement but must meet its spirit by doing something equivalent that they are physically and mentally capable of doing. The governing document is the [Guide to Advancement](#) with its section on [Advancement for Members with Special Needs](#).

***Who can I contact if I need help in meeting the needs of unit members who have disabilities?***

A good place to start is your unit commissioner. Alternatively, consult the [Special Needs Committee Roster](#) to find a member of our team from your district to assist you, or to contact the Assistant Council Commissioner for Special Needs or the Staff Adviser for Special Needs. When in doubt, email your question or concern to [AskSpecialNeeds@googlegroups.com](mailto:AskSpecialNeeds@googlegroups.com).

***I'd like to volunteer to help with the Special Needs Program. Who should I talk to?***

Please consult your District Commissioner to see what they suggest.