

Pass New Laws

Let the scouts debate and then pass new laws, to understand the issues around how countries govern.

Section: All
Time: 30 minutes
Where: Home, Den

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



PLAN

Careful planning can engage the scouts from the start and make this an interesting and useful experience. Working with the scouts, agree some guidelines on what they want the outcome to be. Should the laws be applicable locally, nationally or internationally? Should they be focused on improving the world, maybe based on the many positive improvements proposed in the UN Global Goals? Maybe have a category for silly laws, as these are great fun to do, and then be able to focus on some more serious solutions! Offer advice on coming up with topics to make new laws on. You might suggest that the scouts think about situations which they regard as unfair, or practices which are unethical, polluting or otherwise harmful. If the scouts had a magic wand, what would they do with just one wish to make the world a better and fairer place, and then see could that be achieved by a new law. You might also recommend phrasing the law in such a way that it is a positive rather than a negative; maybe promoting one type of behaviour instead of forbidding another?



In a nutshell...

- Scouts agree a process and some guidelines for agreeing on some new laws.
- They work individually or in small groups to come up with a list of proposals.
- As a group, they share their ideas and discuss their merits, before choosing the best of their 'new laws'.

DO

With the clear guidelines put in place by the scouts, they should be able to get on and come up with a great range of new laws. Working individually or in small groups, try to get the silly suggestions out of the way first. Younger scouts might wish to ban homework while older ones might wish for unrestricted access to social media. When it comes to the more serious topics, be prepared to offer reminders of the guidelines to keep them focussed or help them to come up with ideas. The final stage is to bring the ideas together and discuss them, with a view to picking a few that best represent the views of the group. The act of stating the ideas, listening to other views, and possibly modifying those laws before putting them to a vote could reflect the ways in which many laws are formed both nationally and internationally. Encourage the scouts to work together to achieve the best results, as opposed to having winners and losers, and they could set an example for national parliaments!



Follow-on

If the scouts came up with some new laws which they felt passionate about, why not take it further? How about sending the proposal to relevant law makers or government bodies? All new laws start somewhere, so why not in your scout den?

REVIEW

The review for this activity can be incorporated into the final stage of choosing the laws. Here are some of the ideas which you might raise with the scouts...
 Would any of the scouts see themselves being a politician, or a civil servant or work in a campaign group working to change laws. All of these are ways of directly influencing laws in the future. Do the scouts think that choosing carefully who they vote for could influence what laws will be passed by government? Do they think that young people could make better laws? Why



SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

SDG 16 seeks to Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels. In this activity, scouts can get a feel for the process of negotiating new laws, and a realisation of the need for good laws to make their world a better, safer, more equitable place to live.



Find out more!
 Visit - www.betterworld.ie
 Contact us - sustainability@scouts.ie
 Produced by the Scouting Ireland Sustainable Scouting Team