



Boy Scouts of America Introduces Patch on Responsible Use of Medicine

New SCOUTStrong Be MedWise Award Patch, created in collaboration with the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPiE), raises awareness of the safe use of medicines

Monday, October 19, 2015 -- Today the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) launched the [SCOUTStrong Be MedWise Award](#), providing the opportunity for Scouts to earn a patch for learning about the safe and appropriate use of medicines and bolster their commitment to healthy living. The award's educational curriculum was developed in collaboration with the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPiE). The goal of the award and patch program is to teach Scouts about the importance of using medicines responsibly and the danger of misusing medicines by not following the directions on the label.

Each year, there are approximately 10,000 children and teens seen in emergency rooms due to medication errors from the self-medication of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. Recent surveys show 50 percent of teens begin to self-medicate with OTC medicines in their homes as early as ages 11 to 12. While 43 percent self-medicate after checking with an adult, data shows 22 percent self-medicate without checking in with an adult – reinforcing the need for education. The Be MedWise curriculum primarily focuses on the safe and appropriate use of OTC medicines - medicines that can be bought in pharmacies and grocery stores without a doctor's prescription and that are commonly in household kitchens, closets and medicines cabinets.

“The NCPiE's collaboration with the Boy Scouts of America on the SCOUTStrong Be MedWise Award program encourages Scouts to learn about the medicines in their homes and to be active partners in their own health care,” said Ray Bullman, Executive Vice President of NCPiE. “By building a Be MedWise curriculum for the Scouts, we can better foster the respect and understanding of medicines – and their benefits and risks.”

Scouts can earn the patch, which features an owl that represents wisdom, by completing an educational curriculum covering the following:

- Understanding prescription and OTC medicines - the ways they are similar and differ
- Learning how to use OTC medicines safely
- Knowing what is on the Drug Facts Label and how to follow dosing guidelines
- Appreciating the importance of consulting a parent, trusted adult or medical professional prior to taking medication and ensuring medicines are out of reach from younger siblings and children

The BSA partnered with the National Council on Patient Information and Education to lead the development of the new SCOUTStrong Be MedWise award and patch because of NCPIE's expertise implementing consumer health education programs and developing educational resources. NCPIE collaborated with the BSA to create a fun, interactive, compelling award program that leverages some of the best practices of NCPIE's existing [Be MedWise](#) medicine education programs with the youth-focused medicine safety programs of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ([Medicines in My Home](#)), and Scholastic Inc. and the American Association of Poison Control Centers ([OTC Medicine Safety](#)).

The SCOUTStrong Be MedWise educational materials are publicly available online for use not only by Scout units nationwide, but also by other interested youth groups and health advocacy groups who want to bring safe medicine use education to their communities. To download materials, visit http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BSAFit/MedWise_Award.aspx

About the Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America provides the nation's foremost youth program of character development and values-based leadership training, which helps young people be "Prepared. For Life.®" The Scouting organization is composed of nearly 2.4 million youth members between the ages of 7 and 21 and approximately 960,000 volunteers in local councils throughout the United States and its territories. For more information on the Boy Scouts of America, please visit www.scouting.org.

About National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE)

Organized in 1982, the National Council on Patient Information and Education (NCPIE) is a nonprofit coalition of diverse organizations committed to promoting the wise use of medicines through trusted communication for better health. NCPIE works to address critical medicine safe use issues like adherence improvement, prescription drug abuse prevention, reduction of medication errors, and quality improvements in healthcare provider-patient communication. For more information, visit www.BeMedWise.org.

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