The first girls in the country to become Cub Scouts are loving it

By Minneapolis Star Tribune, adapted by Newsela staff
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When Sylvia VanNorman’s older brother Miles joined the Cub Scouts, Sylvia wanted to join, too. She went along to scout meetings with Miles. She even went to his summer scout camp. But Sylvia could not be a real Cub Scout. It was against the rules. The Boy Scouts did not let girls become members.

Now, that has changed. Last year Boy Scouts ended its boys-only rule. Now Sylvia is a Cub Scout. She is a member of Pack 168 in Edina, Minnesota.

Sylvia recently went camping with her group of girl Cub Scouts. The scouts had to set up a tent on their own. They started a fire using only flint. A flint is a kind of rock. The girls were excited to swim in the lake. They learned how to use a pocket knife, too.

The First Girls Are Loving It

The Boy Scouts have been around for more than 100 years. It only decided that girls could join last fall. Sylvia does not understand why girls were kept out of Scouts for so long.

"I have no clue," she said.

Sylvia is one of the first girls in the country to become a Cub Scout. Her pack is testing out what it means to have both girl and boy members. They started with a new name.

"It's not called Boy Scouts anymore," Sylvia said. "It's called Scouts BSA."

Scouting Has Changed A Lot

The group is creating all-girl and all-boy dens. Those are groups for younger Cub Scouts. Next year it will start forming boys' troops and girls' troops for older scouts, too.

This is a big change for the Boy Scouts. The group has made other changes in the last few years, too.
Last year, the Boy Scouts started letting transgender boys be members. Transgender people belong to a different gender than the one their birth certificate says. Sometimes a person is born and called a girl. However, on the inside the person knows they are a boy. This person would be transgender.

**Allowing Girls Is More Welcoming**

Kent York works for a Boy Scout council. His group makes choices for troops in Sylvia’s area. York said the changes are important. They might make more kids want to join the Scouts. Today, kids have many choices for how to spend their time. They can play sports. Or, they can do other after-school activities.

The Boy Scouts want more kids to be able to join scouting. So they are being more welcoming to all kids. They want everyone to give scouting a try.

**Girls Need A Place To Do Their Best**

Girl Scout leaders are not happy about the latest change to allow girls to join the Boy Scouts. They have started running ads online. The ads say that the Girl Scouts are "For Girls. By Girls. All Girls."

Tish Bolger is the area's Girl Scouts leader. She thinks that Girl Scout troops still do the best job by supporting girls. Bolger said Girl Scouts helps girls to feel safe and empowered. It is a place where girls can really succeed, she said. That is important in today's world. Bolger said that in many careers and public spaces, girls are still overlooked.

However, some girls who are thinking of joining scouts might not even have to choose. Several of the girls in Pack 168 with Sylvia are also Girl Scouts. They do not plan to quit either group. They said they joined Cub Scouts to do even more outdoor activities.

Directions: Use the information found in the article to identify the **best** response for each item.

### R1: Cite text evidence to support an analysis of what the text says **explicitly**

1. How have the Girl Scouts responded to the idea of girls joining the Boy Scouts?
   - A. The Girl Scouts are looking at the possibility of merging with the Boy Scouts to create a single “all-inclusive” organization.
   - B. The Girl Scouts have moved forward with a lawsuit against the Boy Scouts.
   - C. The Girl Scouts are now allowing boys to join its organization.
   - D. The Girl Scouts have increased their advertising, including running ads online.

### R1: Cite text evidence to support an analysis of what the text says **implicitly**

2. Which of the following MOST influenced the Boy Scouts to change its rules on membership?
   - A. a desire to be more welcoming and to encourage more kids to join scouting
   - B. a fear that they would get in trouble for not allowing everyone to join
   - C. a belief that morals, responsibility and leadership should be taught to boys
   - D. a decline in membership because of efforts by the Girl Scouts to actively recruit

### R4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases

3. Read this sentence from the article:
   
   Bolger said Girl Scouts helps girls to feel safe and **empowered**.

   Circle the prefix in the word **empowered**. What does the whole word **empowered** mean?
   - A. to power up a campfire using only a piece of flint
   - B. to go to the state of Power, which is located in the west
   - C. to turn on the power with a switch
   - D. to be put in or given power

### R2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text

4. Read the following paragraph from the section "Girls Need A Place To Do Their Best."

   However, some girls who are thinking of joining scouts might not even have to choose. Several of the girls in Pack 168 with Sylvia are also Girl Scouts. They do not plan to quit either group. They said they joined Cub Scouts to do even more outdoor activities.

   What conclusion is **BEST** supported by the paragraph above?
   - A. Some girls want to only join Girl Scouts.
   - B. Sylvia and other girls are trying to decide if they want to join Girl Scouts or Cub Scouts.
   - C. Scouts BSA makes its members choose whether to be Cub Scouts or Girl Scouts.
   - D. Cub Scouts offers more outdoor activities than Girl Scouts.