

# top five

## reasons kids should join the Scouts

Dr Michael Rice, 47, a GP from Beaudesert, Queensland, has been involved with the Scouts movement since joining the Cubs in 1974.

He is now Venturer Scout Leader of the Beaudesert Scout Group and director of health services for the Australian Jamboree to be held in January next year.

“Jamborees have a population of around 13,000 people for about 10 days,” he says. “That’s bigger than many country towns.”

His three children are also involved in the Scouts; even the youngest – 12-year-old Alex – who “has been going to Scout functions since before he was born”.

1. They learn about leadership, planning and preparing themselves and others. They might be running an activity for a night, co-ordinating a daytrip or weekend camp, or mounting a small expedition.
2. Scouts are encouraged to become independent thinkers, with an emphasis on initiative and problem-solving. A colleague whose organisation has many current or former Scouts as members says he can pick them: “They’re the ones who aren’t on the phone all the time complaining they can’t find something. They’ll jolly well have a look for



Dr Rice, left, with Venturer Scouts Francis Underly (centre) and Dr Rice's son Patrick.

- it, find what they need someplace else or make do with an alternative.”
3. Scouts can expand your child's horizons through making friends from another country, as well as participating in our student exchange programs, aid programs, or national and international conferences.
4. Your child will learn how to cook and wash their own clothes.
5. We don't wrap kids in cotton-wool. They'll get wetter, drier, hotter, colder, dustier and dirtier than they'll get in school. Kids learn to push their limits, in the company of friends, in a controlled and risk-managed environment.