Girl Scouts Louisiana East

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Council Website
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Welcome to the great adventure of Girl Scouting! Thanks to volunteers like you, generations of girls have learned to be leaders in their own lives and in the world.

We know you’re busy and need to be efficient with your time. For that reason, Volunteer Essentials gives you the nitty-gritty in these first few pages . . . what you need to know now, as you plan for your first meetings with girls. We encourage you to read through the Quick Start Guide as soon as you can, and then feel free to read through the rest of this handbook as time permits.

Volunteer Essentials is a reference for you to use as needed. When you have a question, look up the topic in the Table of Contents and you will find your answer. Think of Volunteer Essentials as your encyclopedia to Girl Scout volunteering. It’s here when you need it but, there’s no need to read it all today.

Ready to get started? Let’s Go!

Your Web of Support

A team of volunteers and staff provides you with local support, learning opportunities, and advice. As a volunteer, you will have the most contact with your Girl Scout support team, which may be your community, your volunteer mentor—“GSLE Coach,” or a Council staff member. The next two pages will give you the space to identify and list your support team. As you see the list includes the support position, a brief description of the position, the individual’s name and contact info. Never hesitate to contact them, because your support team is your expert in all things Girl Scouting. If you have questions about the Girl Scout program, working with girls, resources in the national program portfolio (Leadership Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting), or selling Girl Scout Cookies and other products, go to your community team, volunteer mentor, or Council staff member for answers and ongoing support.

Communities are composed of all troops who meet within a specified geographical area. Volunteer community administrators support the delivery of the Girl Scout program in their respective community. There are currently 42 communities in our Council, Girl Scouts Louisiana East.

Communities elect delegates and alternate delegates, members 18 years of age and older, who serve in an advisory capacity to the board. Each community is allotted delegates based on the number of girl members. Delegates represent the community at the Girl Scouts Louisiana East Annual Meeting (usually in April) and suggest ways to enrich Girl Scouting in the community, within Girl Scouts Louisiana East, and within the national organization.
The Girl Scouts Louisiana East official website is www.gsle.org.

Each staff member’s email address is: the first initial and their last name @gsle.org.
For example, Juliette Low’s address would be jlow@gsle.org

All Staff positions, names and extensions are available at: http://www.gsle.org/about-us/who-we-are/staff-directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Community Administrator is</th>
<th>My Community # ______</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name ________________________</td>
<td>□ Meets generally once a month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (________<strong>)</strong>__________</td>
<td>□ Provides adult learning and program information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email ________________________</td>
<td>□ Exchanges ideas with other volunteers/leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Is the volunteer who oversees administration of Girl Scouting in my community</td>
<td>□ Plans community activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Advises and guides volunteers in the community</td>
<td>□ Informs me about council plans and updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Plans and conducts community meetings</td>
<td>When ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Recruits community team members</td>
<td>Where ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time ________________________</td>
<td>Time ________________________</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Troop Support Specialist is</th>
<th>My Internal Recruiting Specialist is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name ________________________</td>
<td>Name ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (________<strong>)</strong>__________</td>
<td>Phone (________<strong>)</strong>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email ________________________</td>
<td>Email ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Appoints community volunteers</td>
<td>□ Places girls and adults in troops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Provides and processes necessary paperwork to manage troop</td>
<td>□ Converts adult members to volunteers as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Provides ongoing council support for volunteers/leaders and communities</td>
<td>□ Helps resolves concerns or problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Helps resolves concerns or problems</td>
<td>□ Clarifies any council policies and/or procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Clarifies any council policies and/or procedures</td>
<td>□ Conducts volunteer screening process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| My External Recruiting Specialist is | |
|-----------------------------------| |
| Name ________________________ | |
| Phone (________<strong>)</strong>__________ | |
| Email ________________________ | |
| □ Along with community team, promotes Girl Scouts in the community | |
| □ Works with recruiters to conduct recruitment campaigns | |
| □ Recruits girls and volunteers into Girl Scouting | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Community GSLE Coach is</th>
<th>My Community Recruiter is</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name ______________________</td>
<td>Name ______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone (<strong><strong><strong><strong><strong>)</strong></strong></strong></strong></strong></td>
<td>Phone (<strong><strong><strong><strong><strong>)</strong></strong></strong></strong></strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email ______________________</td>
<td>Email ______________________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Community Annual Family Giving Chair is</th>
<th>My Community Product Sales Manager is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name _____________________________________</td>
<td>Name _____________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone (________<strong>)</strong>______________________</td>
<td>Phone (________<strong>)</strong>______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email _____________________________________</td>
<td>Email _____________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**My Troop Committee**

- **Troop Product Sales Manager**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

- **First-Aider**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

- **Troop Annual Family Giving Manager**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

- **Troop Camping Consultant**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

**Other Important People:**

- Name ______________________
  - Responsibility_______________________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

- Name ______________________
  - Responsibility_______________________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
  - Email ______________________

**My Troop Meeting**

- Day________________________ Time _________
- Place ____________________________________
  - Phone (__________)________________________

**My Council Volunteer Positions**

- **Annual Family Giving Chair**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________

- **Product Sales Chair**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________

- **Series Coordinator**
  - Name ______________________
  - Phone (__________)__________

- **Camp/Outdoor Coordinator**
  - Name________________________
  - Phone (__________)__________

- **Event Coordinator**
  - Name________________________
  - Phone (__________)__________

- **Travel Coordinator**
  - Name________________________
  - Phone (__________)__________
We Are Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts was founded in 1912 by trailblazer Juliette Gordon Low. We are the largest girl-serving organization in the United States and a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a sisterhood of close to 10 million girls and adults in 145 countries.

Our Mission and Vision

Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. We strive to be the premier leadership organization for girls, and experts on their growth and development.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God* and my country,

To help people at all times,

And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

*Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word “God.” \textbf{Note:} This disclaimer appears in the National Leadership Journey adult guides, but not in the girls’ books. It is included here as a reminder to you, as a volunteer, that it’s your responsibility to be sensitive to the spiritual beliefs of the girls in your group and to make sure that everyone in the group feels comfortable and included in Girl Scouting. Please feel free to share this information with girls’ families.

Girl Scout Law

\begin{itemize}
  \item I will do my best to be honest and fair,
  \item friendly and helpful,
  \item considerate and caring,
  \item courageous and strong,
  \item and responsible for what I say and do,
  \item and respect myself and others,
  \item respect authority,
  \item use resources wisely,
  \item make the world a better place,
  \item and be a sister to every Girl Scout.
\end{itemize}

More than 3 Million Strong

We are urban, rural, and suburban. We are in schools, churches, temples, mosques, public housing, foster homes, and detention centers. We are in virtually every zip code and in 90 countries around the world.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{2.3 million} girls 5 to 18 years of age
  \item \textbf{16,800} Girl Scouts overseas
  \item \textbf{888,000} adult volunteers
  \item \textbf{59 million} alumnae
  \item \textbf{112 councils} throughout the United States
\end{itemize}
At any given time, approximately 10 percent of girls are Girl Scouts, and it’s interesting to know that:

- 80 percent of women business owners were Girl Scouts.
- 69 percent of female U.S. Senators were Girl Scouts.
- 67 percent of female members of the House of Representatives were Girl Scouts.
- Virtually every female astronaut who has flown in space was a Girl Scout.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

We have identified Three Keys to Leadership: girls Discover themselves and their values; Connect with others; and Take Action to make the world a better place. At Girl Scouts, everything centers around the girl: activities are girl-led, which gives girls the opportunity to learn by doing in a cooperative learning environment.

Connect Online


G.I.R.L.

G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader)™ is GSUSA’s new brand platform which emphasizes the types of experiences girls have through Girl Scouting. This key will help you understand how G.I.R.L. defines leadership the Girl Scout way.

ToGetHerThere

At Girl Scouts, we know that when girls are given the opportunity, they change their world. Every girl has an important role to play, and every girl deserves the confidence to achieve anything she sets her sight on. But we need help to ensure that girls in every U.S. zip code develop the confidence that Girl Scouts nurtures. That's why we've launched ToGetHerThere, the largest fundraising campaign for girls in history.

ToGetHerThere is a Movement wide fundraising campaign with the goal of raising $1 Billion for girls by 2020. Every gift to every Girl Scout Council counts toward the goal. Together, we will get her there - to help lead her troop, her family, her community, her company, her country, and her world. To learn more about joining the largest campaign for girls visit girlscouts.org/invest.
Who Can Join Girl Scouts—and How?

Girl Scouts is about sharing the fun, friendship, and power of girls and women together. Any girl—from kindergarten through 12th grade—can join Girl Scouts. Girl Scout volunteers are also a diverse group—you may be a college volunteer working on a community-action project, a parent volunteer ready for an outdoor adventure with your daughter’s group, or any responsible adult (female or male, who have passed the necessary screening process) looking to help prime girls for the day when they’ll lead—however and wherever they choose.

What all members share, whether girls or adults, are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Each member also agrees to follow safety guidelines and pay the annual (one year, October 1 – September 30) membership dues of $25. (Adults have the option of purchasing a lifetime membership for $375). Membership dues are sent by GSLE to Girl Scouts of the USA; no portion of the dues stays with the local council. **Membership dues may not be transferred to another member and are not refundable.**

Girls at Every Grade Level

After girls join, they team up in the following grade levels:

- Girl Scout Daisy (grades K–1)
- Girl Scout Brownie (grades 2–3)
- Girl Scout Junior (grades 4–5)
- Girl Scout Cadette (grades 6–8)
- Girl Scout Senior (grades 9–10)
- Girl Scout Ambassador (grades 11–12)

**Girl Scout grade level is determined by the current membership year beginning October 1.**

Flexible Ways to Participate

Across the country, the Girl Scout community is hard at work on a whole new approach to make sure that everyone can participate in Girl Scouting in the ways they want to. As a volunteer, you can choose from flexible ways to participate that offer the freedom to tailor your level of involvement to fit your schedule and lifestyle. You can also volunteer behind the scenes in your Council office, instead of volunteering directly with girls.

Girls can choose any one, all, or some of the options—camp, events, series, troop, travel, and virtual*— within a single membership year. (**Note that virtual in development.**) As a volunteer, you, have the option of partnering with girls throughout a membership year or committing to an opportunity for only weeks or months.

These grade levels reflect the majority interests of girls and are based on independent research and extensive surveys with thousands of Council staff members from around the country.
Girl Scouts’ Organizational Structure

Girl Scouts is the world’s largest organization of and for girls, currently encompassing 2.3 million girl members and nearly one million volunteers! Three core structures support all these members: the national headquarters, your Council, and your support team.

National Organization and Worldwide Sisterhood

The national office of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), located in New York City, employs roughly 300 employees. Visit www.girlscouts.org, where you will find a wealth of resources for both girls and volunteers.

Global Girl Scouting ensures that girls have increased awareness about the world, cross-cultural learning opportunities, and education on relevant global issues that may inspire them to take action to make the world a better place. Visit www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global/for additional information.

Since 1925, USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO), a division of Global Girl Scouting, has helped ease the transition for American families relocating overseas by offering the familiar traditions and exciting opportunities of Girl Scouting to girls abroad. USAGSO now serves thousands of American girls living overseas, as well as girls attending American or international schools. Through Global Girl Scouting, members participate in World Thinking Day on February 22, visit the four WAGGGS world centers (see the “For Travel Volunteers” appendix), participate in international travel, promote global friendship and understanding by supporting the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, and take action on global issues.

Your Council – Girl Scouts Louisiana East

Girl Scout Councils are chartered by the national organization to establish local responsibility for leadership, administration, and supervision of Girl Scout program, and to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in a geographic area. The national organization provides support materials to all Councils to ensure that the Girl Scout experience is nationally consistent.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East provides a network of support for the leader through employed staff and organization of local volunteer community teams. The leader receives ongoing support for successful troop organization and program. In addition, the Council provides interpretation of Council and GSUSA operations, opportunities for adult learning and sharing, access to program resources, outdoor program and facilities, information through the Council publications and website, Council sponsored activities and access to community sponsored program activities.

Chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA, Girl Scouts Louisiana East is responsible for making Girl Scouting available to every girl, grades K to 12, in 23 parishes. The Council’s charter is dependent upon successful achievement of this objective. The Council is governed by a board of directors, composed of outstanding community volunteers elected by the adult membership. The board establishes goals and policies, listed on the following pages, and oversee fund raising and fiscal affairs. The chief executive officer is responsible to the board of directors for day-by-day operations of the Council.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East’s corporate headquarters is in New Orleans and a regional service center is located in Baton Rouge. Girl Scouts Louisiana East serves 23 parishes which are divided into four geographic regions. A membership team is assigned to each region. Each team is accountable for recruiting, retaining and supporting girl and adult membership.
The regions are:

**Region 1** – Ascension; East & West Baton Rouge; East & West Feliciana; Iberville; Livingston (Denham Springs, Watson, Walker); and Pointe Coupee parishes

**Region 2** - Assumption, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, Lafourche, Terrebonne, and St. Mary parishes

**Region 3** - Livingston (except Denham Springs, Watson, Walker); St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington parishes

**Region 4** - Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard parishes
Girl Scouts Louisiana East Volunteer Policies

- **Introduction**
  In accepting a Council Charter from Girl Scouts of the USA, and non-profit corporate status with the federal and state governments, the Girl Scouts Louisiana East Board of Directors assumes accountability for all activities that it authorizes in the name of Girl Scouting. The Board of Directors hereby acknowledges the accountability with which it is entrusted and adopts the following policies to guide and protect the status of Girl Scout volunteers.

  All Girl Scout Program Standards published by GSUSA in the most recent edition of Safety Activity Checkpoints must be adhered to unless otherwise noted in the following:

- **Volunteer Philosophy**
  We maintain that the strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests in the voluntary leadership of its adult members. Girl Scouts Louisiana East establishes policies and practices to ensure volunteer job satisfaction, effectively employ volunteer talents, and to recognize the volunteers’ contributions and achievements.

- **Affirmative Action**
  There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, religion, age, citizenship, national origin, disability, genetic test results, marital or socioeconomic status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the organization, affirmative action policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of underrepresented population groups.

- **Membership**
  All volunteer adults participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) except those adults who are working in a temporary advisory or consultative capacity. All volunteers shall agree to abide by the policies, standards, principles and accepted practices of GSUSA and the Council.

- **Selection**
  Every adult volunteer is selected on the basis of qualifications for membership, willingness to accept and perform the duties defined in the volunteer position description, commitment to actively support Council fund development, and willingness and availability to complete mandatory training for the position.

  Consistent with the law, Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not appoint or retain volunteers who have been convicted of crimes of violence (such as, but not limited to, assault, battery, rape, murder or manslaughter), drug dealing (including the possession of controlled substances with intent to sell), child abuse/endangerment or any other crime directly related to the performance of the specific job. Convicted felons or sex offenders living in the same household cannot volunteer. Spouses of convicted felons or sex offenders may have some restrictions imposed on them. The Council conducts pre-appointment and/or post-appointment screening appropriate for the volunteer position on volunteers as recommended by GSUSA and according to Federal and State laws. Operational and policy-making volunteers are required to complete the appropriate volunteer application and authorizations for the appropriate screening process.

- **Placement**
  Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of the Council. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other
positions and they may request reassignment.

Each volunteer position will have a written position description that defines specific responsibilities, term of appointment, and qualifications. The position description provides the basis for performance review and evaluation. Reappointment takes place after completion of a satisfactory performance review and mutual acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and a time commitment.

- **Adult Learning**
  All operational volunteers will complete orientation and learning for the volunteer position within the time designated as mandatory for that position. Failure to do so will mandate temporary or permanent removal from the appointed position until or unless required courses are completed.

- **Activities**
  Activities involving unpredictable safety variables are not recommended as Girl Scout program activities. These include but are not limited to:
  - Hot air ballooning
  - Bungee jumping
  - Flying in small private planes, helicopters, or blimps
  - Go-carting
  - Hang gliding
  - Stunt skiing
  - Motor biking
  - Parachuting
  - Riding all-terrain vehicles
  - Riding motorized personal watercraft like jet-skis
  - Trampolining
  - Hunting
  - Simulated skydiving and zero-gravity rooms
  - Parasailing

**Water activities:** must be supervised by individuals currently certified through an organization approved by the Council.

**Parades:** For safety reasons, following Safety Activity Checkpoints, and because of the unique traditions of parades throughout the Girl Scouts Louisiana East jurisdiction, girls may only participate in parades as walking groups with adequate adult supervision. Girls may not ride floats or other moving vehicles or distribute (throw) beads, trinkets, etc. from moving vehicles or trailers. Girls may only throw beads, trinkets, etc. while participating in parades when walking.

- **Benefits**
  Benefits to volunteers include: opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of girls; networking with adults with similar interests and values; training and other learning opportunities; support in the position; evaluation of job performance; Council support materials and publications; liability and supplementary accident insurance for approved activities; and a formal recognition system.

- **Uniforms**
  Volunteers are strongly encouraged to purchase and wear the Girl Scout adult uniform; however, a uniform is not required for participation in Girl Scouting. Operational and policy-making volunteers are encouraged to wear a navy blue suit and the Girl Scout pin.
• **Anti-Harassment**
Harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetic test results is a violation of the law and the Council expressly prohibits any form of harassment on these bases.

• **Anti-Sexual Harassment**
The Council is committed to provide volunteers with an environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment has been defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.” It is against the organization’s policies for any volunteer, male or female, to sexually harass another volunteer, employee, or Girl Scout member of the same or opposite sex.

The Council reserves the right to refuse membership endorsement, appointment or reappointment, and to dismiss or suspend from affiliation with the Council any volunteer who, in conducting the Girl Scout program, advocates, solicits, or promotes a personal lifestyle or sexual orientation.

• **Anti-Child Abuse**
The Council supports and maintains environments that are free from child abuse and neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts and it is against the Council’s policy for any volunteer, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any girl member. Volunteers are expected to follow Council procedures for reporting suspected child abuse.

The Council will refuse membership endorsement, appointment or reappointment, and dismiss or exclude from affiliation with the Council, any volunteer who is found guilty and/or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect.

• **Substance Abuse**
Drugs (other than prescription medication) shall not be used at any Girl Scout sponsored activity. Alcoholic beverages shall not be consumed on a Girl Scout sponsored activity when children are present. Smoking is not allowed in the presence of girls. Violation of the Council’s policy regarding drugs or alcohol will result in immediate termination of the services of a volunteer.

• **Formal Problem Resolution Policy**
The Council maintains an open door policy regarding volunteer concerns. Most complaints and concerns can be resolved when they are brought to the attention of the operational volunteer’s immediate supervisor through informal communications. When an operational volunteer and her/his immediate supervisor are unable to resolve a concern through informal efforts, the formal problem resolution procedure may be initiated by the operational volunteer without fear of jeopardizing her/his status. Once initiated, the procedure may be terminated at any time by the operational volunteer.

To enact the formal problem resolution process, an operational volunteer submits the concern in writing, to the Human Resources Department of the Council. Human Resources will initiate the investigation in consult with the immediate supervisor and the chief executive officer. The goal is to resolve the problem within a maximum of 15 days from the date the written concern was received by Human Resources.

• **Termination**
Any volunteer may terminate her/his services upon written notification to the volunteer or staff supervisor. The Council may terminate the services of a volunteer for reasons including, but not limited to: indebtedness beyond forty-five (45) days to the Council; restructuring or elimination of volunteer positions; the inability or failure to complete the requirements or perform the duties of the position; the refusal to comply with or support Council or GSUSA policies standards, goals, and procedures; the refusal to support the mission and values of the organization or conduct contrary to the mission and values of the organization such as, but not limited to, malicious gossip, derogatory attacks on another, theft, fraud or dishonesty.
• **Privacy and Confidentiality**

  **Privacy:** The Council is committed to the responsible collection, management and use of personal information provided by members. The Council limits the use of personal information to conducting the business of Girl Scouting except for disclosures required by law. The Council uses reasonable measures to ensure the security, confidentiality and integrity of personal information and guard against unauthorized access or use. Employees or members who violate Council security procedures will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include termination.

  **Confidentiality:** Volunteers must not disclose names, addresses, phone numbers, and other information about adult and girl members to any individual or business outside of Girl Scouting or publish this type of information about adult and girl members on the Internet without expressed written consent applicable and limited to a specific use.

• **Confidentiality of Information**

  It is the policy of the Council to ensure that the operations, activities, and affairs of the Council and its members are kept confidential to the greatest possible extent (refer also to the Conflict of Interest Policy in these Policies). If, during their employment, employees acquire confidential or proprietary information about the Council and its members, such information is to be handled in strict confidence and not to be discussed with outsiders during or after the employee’s term of employment with the Council. Employees are also responsible for the internal security of such information.

• **Proprietary and Confidential Information**

  Information developed with the organizational resources of Girl Scouts Louisiana East, including the analysis of data, is the confidential and proprietary property of Girl Scouts Louisiana East. Such information used and developed by volunteers, the Board of Directors, Board Development Committee, Board standing committees or task groups, or employed staff is considered proprietary information of Girl Scouts Louisiana East and hence all participants agree to protect such information and use it only for and within the parameters of their official capacity with Girl Scouts Louisiana East. External release of such information is the exclusive responsibility of the Board of Directors or its designees.

  Any volunteer, employee or any member of his/her family shall not use for personal advantage or for the advantage of any other person or business entity, proprietary and confidential information or material acquired in the discharge of his/her duties.

  In the event that a volunteer or staff member is found to have released proprietary information without authorization, the matter shall be referred to the CEO for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Girl Scouts Louisiana East reserves the right to take appropriate legal action to protect the confidentiality of the material and to recover damages suffered as a result of the unauthorized release of such information. This agreement survives the employee or volunteer’s tenure with Girl Scouts Louisiana East.

• **Business Ethics**

  **Code of Conduct:** The Council prides itself on the high standards of excellence embodied by our core values and professional and business culture. We expect any persons representing the Council to personify these ideals in their dealings both inside and outside the organization.

  **Conflict of Interest:** All persons are to be aware of potential conflicts of interest and any person who engages in conflicts of interest may be excluded from affiliation with the Council. Potential conflicts of interest include but are not limited to:

  o Performing services for money or other personal gain for any supplier or vendor to the Council;
  o Family member performing services for money or other personal gain for any supplier or vendor to the Council;
o Having ownership interests (such as stock) in a supplier or vendor to the Council.

If such a situation arises, or an individual is unsure if a situation constitutes a conflict of interest, he or she must immediately report the circumstances of the situation to the Finance Management Committee. If the Finance Management Committee determines that such circumstances constitute a conflict of interest, they must immediately report such conflict to the Board of Directors.

- **Council Funds and Assets**
  All persons who have access to Council’s funds and assets should follow the prescribed procedures for recording, handling, and protecting money. The Council does not tolerate any form of fraudulent or dishonest acts. Strict standards to prevent fraud and dishonesty are imposed by the Council. Legal action to the point of prosecution will be taken.

- **Reporting of Illegal or Unethical Behavior**
  If any adult volunteer of the Council observes or knows of possible or actual violations of this Policy, or has any questions about its meaning, intent and/or application, it is that individual’s responsibility to report such situations or pose any questions promptly to the Human Resources Department. If for any reason a person is not comfortable approaching the staff member responsible for Human Resources, any one of the following avenues are also acceptable means of reporting illegal or unethical behavior:

  - Send a note, with any relevant documents, by mail to Jacqueline K. Alexander, Chief Executive Officer, Girl Scouts Louisiana East, 841 S. Clearview Parkway, New Orleans, LA 70121, and mark the outside envelope “Confidential”
  - Or contact the Board Chair, Girl Scouts Louisiana East Board of Directors, 841 S. Clearview Parkway, New Orleans, LA 70121.

  All matters will be treated as strictly confidential, and also may be reported on an anonymous basis. The Council will not allow retaliation in any form for any reports that are made in good faith.
Council Funding

One hundred percent of the annual membership fee for girls and adults is sent to the national organization, GSUSA. This fee provides funds for national program development and insurance coverage of Girl Scout members.

Girl Scout Louisiana East sources of income include:

- Product programs (Cookies, Nuts & Candy and Magazines)
- Annual Family Giving
- Major gifts
- Donations and grants from corporations and foundations
- Resident Camp and program fees
- United Way
- Endowments
- Interest from reserve operating accounts

See the Girl Scouts Louisiana East Annual Report available on the Council website for further details on income and expenditures. A full financial report is also given to the members of the Council each April at the Girl Scouts Louisiana East Annual Meeting.

Annual Family Giving

Girl Scouts Louisiana East counts on the support of our member families to help fund programs for girls, training for leaders and financial assistance. The campaign begins in the fall with the community Annual Family Giving Chairs providing training and materials. One hundred percent of every family giving dollar supports programs for girls in our Council.

All tax-deductible family giving dollars are invested in:

- Financial assistance for girls
- Volunteer learning and support
- Council programs
- Camp properties

Community Administrators, Troop Leaders and Advisors are asked to:

- Appoint an Annual Family Giving Chair
- Make sure the Annual Family Giving Captain receives training, support and materials.

Annual Family Giving Chairs are asked to:

- Give every family the opportunity to make a contribution by asking for a specific gift or organizing an event whose proceeds benefit Annual Family Giving
- Follow-up with each family
- Turn in contributions in a timely fashion
- Communicate Community progress toward annual community goal with the Council Fund Development department.
Workplace Giving

Girl Scouts Louisiana East participates in area United Way campaigns and other workplace giving campaigns. Donations designated for Girl Scouts Louisiana East, less an administrative processing fee, go directly to Girl Scouts Louisiana East. Please check with your local parish United Way Agency for the Girl Scout donation number.

Planned Giving (The Girl Scouts Louisiana East permanently restricted endowment)

The Juliette Gordon Low Society is a group of individuals whose love of Girl Scouting is like yours, whose interest in the long term vitality of Girl Scouting is strong, and who wish that our girls will enjoy camping, learning, and wondering together for decades to come. Members of the Juliette Gordon Low Society are people who have made a planned gift to Girl Scouts Louisiana East in their will or through some other planned giving vehicle. Contact the Development Department for more information on planned giving.

Girl Scouts Girl Scouts Louisiana East Council Shops

You can purchase emblems, pins, participation patches, exclusive Council Badges and fun patches—along with badges and leadership awards, program books and uniforms — at the Louisiana East Council Shops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Orleans Shop (in Jefferson Parish)</th>
<th>Baton Rouge Shop</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>841 South Clearview Parkway</td>
<td>545 Colonial Dr.</td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans, LA 70121</td>
<td>Baton Rouge, LA 70806</td>
<td>First Saturday, September - May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504-733-8220</td>
<td>225-927-8946</td>
<td>9:00 AM – 1:00 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the following information go to the Council Shop pages of Louisiana East’s website: www.gsle.org

1. Hours of Operation
2. Directions
3. Current Catalogs
4. Purchasing Options/Special Orders
5. Return Policy

Online ordering is available at: http://shop.gsle.org. If you are traveling a long distance to one of the shops, call ahead to be sure the items you need are in stock.

Girl Scout Trademarks

GSUSA grants permission to local councils and licensed vendors to use the Girl Scout symbol (logo) under specific guidelines. Girl Scouts Louisiana East volunteers and girls are permitted to use the Contemporary Girl Scout or Trefoil logo on all printed materials distributed for the purposes of membership recruitment; troop/group, community business; girl and adult recognition training. The use of the Contemporary Girl Scout or Trefoil logo for any other purposes including but not limited to imprinting on items of clothing requires advance approval from Girl Scouts Louisiana East.

Use of the Girl Scout Gold Award, Silver Award, and Bronze Award symbol is one of the intellectual property assets that GSUSA does not give third party rights to, and as such cannot be used by any third party organization. All use of any of these symbols (i.e. logo) requires advance approval from Girl Scouts Louisiana East’s Marketing Communications department at 504-733-8220.

The unauthorized use of the Girl Scout name and trademarks may result in diminished value of the Girl Scout brand. To ensure optimum brand identity, Girl Scout products and designs must convey clear and consistent messages to Girl Scouts, non-Girl Scouts and potential Girl Scouts. Everyone in Girl Scouting has a role in protecting the Girl Scout name and trademarks against unauthorized, inconsistent and unlicensed use.

Approval for use of the logo is determined by a member of the council’s Marketing Communications department following review of the brand usage guidelines written by Girl Scouts of the USA and posted in the Brand Center. Girl
Scouts of the USA also provides council staff with G.I.R.L. graphic guidelines and To Get Her There guidelines also found in the Brand Center.
Getting Started with the National Leadership Program through Journeys

The Girl Scout program is based on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), in which girls Discover themselves, Connect with others, and Take Action to make the world a better place—all within the safety of an all-girl environment where girls take the lead, learn doing, and learn cooperatively.

At the core of the GSLE are National Leadership Journeys, fun and challenging experiences grouped around a theme and spread over a series of sessions. Each Journey has all the important components of the GSLE sewn right in. So, to guide girls on a Journey, all you need is enthusiasm and a sense of adventure. Before you dive in, try these six simple tips:

1. **Choose a Journey.** Because Girl Scouting is girl-led, it’s important to give girls the chance to pick the Journey they want to do. Talk to them about what each Journey for their grade level is about and let them choose one.

2. **Get to know the Journey.** Pick up a girls’ book and an adult guide. Read the girls’ book for the pleasure of it, just to get an overview of the Journey’s theme and content.

3. **Invite girls (and their parents/guardians) to use their imaginations** to make the Journey come to life in ways that excite them. Remember that you and the girls don’t have to do everything exactly as laid out in the sample sessions.

4. **Step back and watch** how the girls, with your knowledge, support, and guidance, have enormous fun and a rewarding experience. Celebrate with them as they earn their National Leadership Journey awards—and perhaps some Girl Scout badges, too!
Planning in a Girl-Led Environment

It’s important to start planning your time with girls. You should consider the following questions and begin to map out your Girl Scout year:

- How many times each month will you meet? When do you plan to break for holidays?
- How many weeks do you need to allocate for the Girl Scout Cookie Program?
- Will you have time in your schedule for guest speakers and other visitors?
- If you’ve worked with this group before, what are their preferences: badge work? field trips? other activities?

For specific ideas on how to incorporate badges, trips, and other Girl Scout traditions into a Journey, check out the online Journey maps for the grade level of the girls you’re partnering with.

If your group will be meeting for less than a year (such as at a resident camp or during a series), you will be able to adjust the calendar to suit your needs. In the same way, if you’re planning a multi-year event (such as a travel excursion), add one or two more years to the framework.

After you’ve drafted a loose framework, ask the girls what they think. Or, create the online calendar together! Remember that you want girls to lead, but younger girls will need more guidance, while older girls will require much less. Seniors and Ambassadors may not even want you to draft a calendar in advance, so if they balk at what you’ve done, let them take the reins. (Journeys for older girls include planning pages specifically designed to help them customize their Journey.) Daisies and Brownies, on the other hand, may enjoy your calendar and just fill in a few ideas here and there, which will clue you in to their interests.

As your group starts its Journey, begin a discussion (or debate!) going on the Journey’s theme and what it means to the girls. Probe to find out what they’re most interested in accomplishing during their time together, and then help them connect those interests to their Journey.
Meeting with Girls for the First Time

When you first get together with girls (and this meeting may also include parents/guardians, or you may decide to hold a separate meeting for the adults), you’ll want to get to know the girls, and give them a chance to get to know one another.

Icebreaker games that let girls share simple details about themselves are a great way to start off your first gathering. Journeys often start with such an icebreaker, so if you’re digging into a Journey right away, you’ll be all set. You can also check the Council’s resources or search the Internet for “ice breakers for kids” to find more ideas.

If you already know which Journey the girls want to do, you’ll find it useful to accomplish some of the following during this meeting. (Note that all these points are detailed in the adult guide for each Journey, too). If your girls haven’t chosen a Journey yet, you can spend time during the first meeting talking about the themes of the three Journeys that are available for their grade level and find out which one the group would like to do. You can then discuss these points in the next meeting, if you run out of time.

1. **Introduce the Journey, its theme, and its ties to leadership.** Each Journey’s adult guide gives you ideas for talking with girls and their parents/guardians about the Journey’s theme and the Three Keys to Leadership.

2. **Find out what interests the group (and be sure to include the other adult volunteers), so that you and the girls can begin to customize the Journey.** Do the girls want to dig deeper into a particular aspect of the Journey? Without promising anything (yet!), ask the girls to talk about what they’re passionate about, what they’ve always wanted to do, and how they would spend their time if money and other barriers were no object. Build off the ideas shared, but be sure to include opinions from all the girls. Ask direct questions of those who seem to be holding back or are unsure about answering, so everyone is included.

3. **Get the girls talking about how they want to schedule their time together.** Use the planning pages from their Journey, referring to your draft calendar only as needed, so the girls lead. Consider questions like these:
   - Can girls organize and plan a field trip or longer *travel opportunity that will allow them to learn more about a particular Journey topic or theme?
   - Is there an event that meshes with this topic or area of interest?
   - Can the girls locate and communicate with an expert in the field via email or social media?
   - Can they invite a guest speaker to answer questions or demonstrate particular skills?
   - Which badges can the group choose to work on that will deepen their skills in this particular area?
   - If they are Juniors or older, are they interested in pursuing their Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, or Gold Awards?
   - Do they have ideas for activities that will involve younger or older girls?

*Girl Scouts Louisiana East requires travel training for extended trips lasting 3 or more nights.*
Using the Safety Activity Checkpoints

When preparing for any activity with girls, start by reading the Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints for that particular activity. You can find these on our Girl Scouts Louisiana East website on the Volunteer Resource page at www.gsle.org/volunteer-resources.

Each Safety Activity Checkpoint offers you information on where to do this activity, how to include girls with disabilities, where to find both basic and specialized gear required for the activity, how to prepare yourselves for the activity, and what specific steps to follow on the day of the activity, and so on.

In addition to reading these checkpoints yourself, you can email or print them for co-volunteers, parents/guardians, and the girls themselves. The checkpoints are formatted as checklists, so that you, your co-volunteers, and the girls can check off each step that has been accomplished.

In keeping with the three processes of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, be sure that

- **All activities are girl-led.** Take into account the age and abilities of the girls. Older girls can take the bulk of the responsibility for carefully planning and executing activities, while younger girls will require more of your guidance but should still be deeply involved in making decisions about their activities.
- **Girls have the chance to learn cooperatively.** Have girls teach each other new skills they may need for activities, rather than hearing all that from you.
- **Girls learn by doing.** If research or special equipment is needed, they will learn better doing that research themselves than by having you do the legwork and report back to them. Even Daisies can do basic research and give reports or do show-and-tell for each other. Ambassadors may need you only for moral support as they research, teach each other, and plan every detail of their excursions.

If Safety Activity Checkpoints do not exist for an activity you and the girls are interested in, check with your council **before** making any definite plans with the girls. A few activities are allowed only with written council pre-approval and only for girls 12 and over, while some are off-limits completely:

- **Caution:** You must get written pre-approval from your council for girls ages 12 and older who will operate motorized vehicles, such as go-carts and personal watercraft; take trips on waterways that are highly changeable or uncontrollable; or fly in noncommercial aircraft, such as small private planes, helicopters, sailplanes, untethered hot air balloons, and blimps.
- **Warning:** The following activities are never allowed for any girl: potentially uncontrolled free-falling (bungee jumping, hang gliding, parachuting, parasailing, go-karting, and outdoor trampolining); creating extreme variations of approved activities (such as high-altitude climbing and aerial tricks on bicycles, skis, snowboards, skateboards, water-skis, and wakeboards); hunting; shooting a projectile at another person; riding all-terrain vehicles and motor bikes; and taking watercraft trips in Class V or higher.

An additional note: Girl Scouts welcomes and serves girls and families from a wide spectrum of faiths and cultures. When girls wish to participate in discussions or activities that could be considered sensitive—even for some—put the topic on hold until you have spoken with parents and received guidance from your Council. When Girl Scout activities involve sensitive issues, your role is that of a caring adult who can help girls acquire skills and knowledge in a supportive atmosphere, not someone who advocates a particular position. You are required to obtain permission slips signed by the girls’ parents/guardians; see the “Engaging Girls at All Grade Levels” chapter of this handbook for more information.
Understanding How Many Volunteers You Need

Girl Scout groups are large enough to provide a cooperative learning environment and small enough to allow development of individual girls. The following group sizes are recommended:

- Girl Scout Daisies: 5–12 girls
- Girl Scout Brownies: 10–20 girls
- Girl Scout Juniors: 10–25 girls
- Girl Scout Cadettes: 5–25 girls
- Girl Scout Seniors: 5–30 girls
- Girl Scout Ambassadors: 5–30 girls
Girl Scouts’ adult-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls. Council events may also establish maximums due to size of venue or cost restrictions. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls—for example, if one adult has to respond to an emergency, a second adult is always on hand for the rest of the girls. It may take you a minute to get used to the layout of this chart, but once you start to use it, you’ll find the chart extremely helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group Meetings</th>
<th>Events, Travel, and Camping*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for every:</td>
<td>Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Daisies (K–grade 1)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some examples: If you’re meeting with 17 Daisies, you’ll need three adults, at least two of whom are unrelated (in other words, not your sister, spouse, parent, or child), and at least one of whom is female. If this isn’t making sense to you, follow the chart: you need two adults for 12 Daisies and one more adult for up to six more girls. You have 17, so you need three adults. If, however, you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting, you need only two unrelated adults, at least one of which is female (because, on the chart, two adults can manage up to 25 Cadettes).

In addition to the adult-to-girl ratios, please remember that adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old or at the age of majority defined by the state, if it is older than 18. *GSLE supports travel opportunities for girls and promotes their leadership development by allowing only the required minimum of adults per program age level.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East requires that all adults working directly with girls should be registered members of the organization and have completed the volunteer application and screening process. In other words, a Volunteer Application and background screening is required for troop leaders, co-leaders, product sales
volunteers, adults that camp with the troop and adults who frequently attend meetings and/or troop outings.

Adult supervision for all girls also extends to any online activity. For additional information on online safety, please consult:

- The “Computer/Online Use” Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge
Following the Girl Scouts Safety Guidelines

Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls, and we all demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these guidelines at all times.

1. **Follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints.** Instructions for staying safe while participating in activities are detailed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints, available at [www.gsle.org/volunteer-resources](http://www.gsle.org/volunteer-resources). Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls before engaging in activities.

2. **Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls.** Your group must have at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary, depending on the size of the group and the ages and abilities of girls. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old, registered member of Girl Scouts, and must be screened by our Council before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female.

3. **Get parent/guardian permission.** When an activity takes place that is outside the normal time and place, or a topic is discussed that could be considered sensitive, advise each parent/guardian of the details of the activity and obtain permission for girls to participate.

4. **Report abuse.** Sexual advances, improper touching, and sexual activity of any kind with girl members are forbidden. Physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. Follow our Council’s guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting.

5. **Be prepared for emergencies.** Work with girls and other adults to establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/adults, and site security. Always keep handy a well-stocked first-aid kit, girl health histories, and contact information for girls’ families.

6. **Travel safely.** When transporting girls to planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities that are outside the normal time and place, every driver must be an approved adult volunteer, over the age of 21 years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears her seat belt at all times, and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

7. **Ensure safe overnight outings.** Prepare girls to be away from home by involving them in planning, so they know what to expect. Avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. During family or parent-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the same sleeping quarters in program areas. When parents are staffing events, daughters should remain in quarters with other girls rather than in staff areas.

8. **Role-model the right behavior.** Never use illegal drugs. Don’t consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls.

9. **Create an emotionally safe space.** Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a group agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior, and discrimination.

10. **Ensure that no girl is treated differently.** Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

11. **Promote online safety.** Instruct girls never to put their full names or contact information online or engage in virtual conversation with strangers. Girls should never arrange in-person meetings with online contacts, other than to deliver cookies and only with the approval and accompaniment of a parent or designated adult. On group web sites, publish girls’ first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge ([http://www.girlscouts.org/en/help/help/internet-safety-pledge.html](http://www.girlscouts.org/en/help/help/internet-safety-pledge.html)) and have them commit to it.
12. **Keep girls safe during money-earning activities.** Girl Scout cookies and other Council-sponsored product programs are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product programs, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes, and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout–approved product programs and efforts.
Chapter 1: Sharing Your Unique Gifts

No matter how you volunteer with Girl Scouts, your investment of time and energy will pay back tenfold. With your help, girls will be able to identify issues they care about and work with one another to resolve them. Your interests and life experiences make you the perfect person to be a new kind of partner for girls, someone who creates a safe environment where they can work together and each girl feels free to work toward her highest aspirations. Have no doubt - you, and nearly one million other volunteers like you, are helping girls make a lasting impact on the world.

Understanding Your Role as a Girl Scout Volunteer

Your most important role as a Girl Scout volunteer is to be excited about everything this opportunity affords you: a chance to help girls succeed, play a critical role in their lives, and watch them blossom! You also want to be someone who enjoys the activities you will be embarking on with the girls—whether you’re volunteering at a camp, working with girls who are traveling, or partnering with girls on a short-term series on a topic that interests you.

As a Girl Scout volunteer, you will serve as a partner and role model to girls. You will also work closely with a co-volunteer, because two adults must be present at all times when working with girls, and at least one of those volunteers must be female and not related to the other adult. This is an important distinction that bears repeating: Men can serve as troop volunteers, but two adult females, who are not related to any of the other volunteers, must be present at all times, and only in cases of emergency is a girl to be alone with only one volunteer. Remember to also check the adult-to-girl ratios in the “How Many Volunteers do you Need” and the “Being Safety-Wise” sections of this handbook.

In More than ‘Smores: Success and Surprises in Girl Scouts Outdoor Experiences, the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) has described the role of Adult Volunteers:

“Because everything girls do outdoors in Girl Scouts must be supported by an adult, these results speak indirectly to adult volunteers and their preparation. To get girls outdoors more regularly, Girl Scouts need adult volunteers who encourage and promote outdoor experiences. Communicating to volunteers and parents that casual outdoor experiences are effective ways of giving girls opportunities to build competencies and try new things may be the key to opening the gateway for all Girl Scouts to participate in the outdoors on a more regular basis.” (2014, p.27)

Your Responsibilities

Your other responsibilities as a Girl Scout volunteer include:

- Registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA.
- Accepting the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
- Understanding the Three Keys to Leadership that are the basis of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience: Discover, Connect, and Take Action.
- Sharing your knowledge, experience, and skills with a positive and flexible approach.
- Working in a partnership with girls so that their activities are girl-led, allow them to learn by doing, and allow for cooperative (group) learning; you will also partner with other volunteers and Council staff for support and guidance.
- Organizing fun, interactive, girl-led activities that address relevant issues and match girls’ interests and needs.
• Providing guidance and information regarding Girl Scout group meetings with girls’ parents or guardians on a regular and ongoing basis through a variety of tools, including email, phone calls, newsletters, blogs, other forms of social media, and any other method you choose.
• Processing and completing registration forms and other paperwork, such as permission slips.
• Communicating effectively and delivering clear, organized, and vibrant presentations or information to an individual or the troop/group.
• Overseeing with honesty, integrity, and careful record-keeping the funds that girls raise.
• Maintaining a close connection to your volunteer support team as well as your council.
• Facilitating a safe experience for every girl.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

*Girl Scouts of the USA makes no attempt to define or interpret the word “God” in the Girl Scout Promise. It looks to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs. When making the Girl Scout Promise, individuals may substitute wording appropriate to their own spiritual beliefs for the word “God.” Note: This disclaimer appears in the National Leadership Journey adult guides, but not in the girls’ books. It is included here as a reminder to you, as a volunteer, that it’s your responsibility to be sensitive to the spiritual beliefs of the girls in your group and to make sure that everyone in the group feels comfortable and included in Girl Scouting. Please feel free to share this information with girls’ families.

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do,

and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Your Volunteer Support Team

In your role as a Girl Scout volunteer, you will team up with co-volunteer(s), parents/guardians, members of the community, Council staff, and others who have expressed interest in working alongside you. The adult guide of each Journey gives you tips and guidance for creating a friends-and-family network to support you all along the way.

The other volunteers on your support team may help by:
• Filling in for you, arranging meeting places
• Being responsible for communicating with girls and parents/guardians
• Locating adults with special skills to facilitate a specialized meeting
• Assisting with trips and chaperoning
If you have a large support team, the first thing you will want to do is meet with this group and discuss what brought each of you to Girl Scouts, review your strengths and skills, and talk about how you would like to work together as a team. You might also discuss:

- When important milestones will happen (Girl Scout Cookie and Fall Product program, field trips, travel plans, events, dates for a series or camp) and how long the planning process will take
- When and where to meet as a group of volunteers, if necessary
- When, where, and how often to hold parent/guardian meetings
- Whether an advance trip to a destination, event site, or camp needs to occur

Remember to call on your volunteer support team. This team can help you observe a meeting, assign you a mentor, help with registration forms, assist you with opening a bank account, plan your first meeting, and so on. Also plan to attend community meetings or conferences—usually held several times throughout the year—which provide excellent opportunities to learn from other volunteers.

Taking Advantage of Learning Opportunities

Girl Scouts strives to provide you with the necessary information to successfully manage your group of girls and to let you know how and where you can get additional information on certain topics when you want to learn more. Volunteer learning is offered in a variety of ways to best meet your unique learning styles: written resources, face-to-face learning, interactive online learning—and additional methods are being developed and tested all the time.

There's a good chance you've already logged on to GS University to watch Girl Scouting 101 or Volunteering for Girl Scout Series and Events, our self-paced, online orientations to Girl Scouting. If you haven't, please contact your local council for your passwords. Those online sessions and Volunteer Essentials are designed to give you all of the information you need to start working with girls. They're always available; think of them as references you can use whenever you need them.

Additionally, GSLE offers an assortment of face to face and online learning opportunities. For the current list of Adult Learning sessions go to: www.gsle.org/en/for-volunteers/volunteer-training.html.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you would like to:</th>
<th>Take this course:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in any position.</td>
<td><strong>Girl Scouting 101</strong> - online Introduction to Girl Scouting introduces new volunteers to Girl Scouts’ inspiring national leadership experience, from Journey resources and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting to cookie programs, safety guidelines, and much more. Spend about 45-50 minutes learning online-whenever you can fit it into your schedule. GS University (<a href="http://gsuniversity.girlscouts.org/volunteers/courses/">http://gsuniversity.girlscouts.org/volunteers/courses/</a>). *Required of all volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work directly or indirectly with girls, i.e. Troop Leaders, Camp, Series, Event, Travel or Virtual Volunteers.</td>
<td><strong>Volunteer Orientation</strong> - face-to-face orientation with a volunteer manager or staff member, focusing on your volunteer position and Girl Scouts Louisiana East procedures. This session is scheduled directly with a volunteer mentor or staff member. If you do not have a volunteer mentor, please call 1-800-644-7571 to schedule this session. After completing this session volunteers should acquire an adult set(s) of Journeys for their girls’ grade level and begin meeting with their girls. *Required of all volunteers</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Volunteer as a Troop Leader, Assistant Troop Leader, Camp, Series, Event, Travel or Virtual Volunteer directly mentoring girls. | **Leadership Essentials** – Online or face-to-face group session focusing on managing a group of girls while providing a safe Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Introduction to incorporating *Journeys, The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* and all aspects of girl led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning into your troop/group’s experience.  
*Volunteers should complete this session within 30 days of starting the troop/group meetings.*  
**Required of all volunteers** |
|---|---|
| Work directly with girls, i.e. Troop Leaders, Camp, Series, Event, Travel Volunteers | **Darkness to Light® Stewards of Children™** - a face to face group session or online. A revolutionary sexual abuse prevention training program that educates adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse. The program believes and teaches that child safety is an adult’s job. The program is designed for organizations that serve children and youth and offers training on the 7 Steps for Protecting Children from sexual abuse.  
*Required of one volunteer per troop.* |
| GS201 - working with Daisy, Brownie and Junior Girl Scouts  
GS301- working with Cadette, Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts | **Girl Scouting 201/301** – an optional face-to-face group session of volunteers who work with Girl Scouts reviewing the latest GSUSA program resources: *Leadership Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* and reinforcing all aspects of girl led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning into your troop/group’s experience.  
*Volunteers should complete this course every three (3) years.* |
| Take a troop/group on an outing. Must be a registered and screened adult volunteer. | **First Aid & Adult/Child CPR** consists of hands-on, lecture and visual information on administering CPR and first aid to adults and children.  
*Required of at least one adult volunteer working with a troop or group.* Does not have to be the troop leader or assistant troop leader. The CPR/First Aid certified adult must be present at all troop meetings. |
| Take a troop/group on a day or overnight camping and/or outdoor cooking experience. Must be a registered and screened adult volunteer. | **Camping Skills**  
- **Camp Prep & Paperwork** – power point session-getting you ready for your camp session.  
- **Camp Ready** – power point session-ensuring your troop/group is ready to camp  
- **Basic Camping**- overnight or day only at Council campsite or approved outdoor site.  
*Required of at least one adult volunteer working with a troop or group before planning a day outing with a cookout or a camping trip.* Does not have to be the troop leader or assistant troop leader.  
*Volunteers should complete this course every five (5) years.* |
| Travel with the troop. Must be a registered and screened adult volunteer. | **Passport to Troop Travel**– an extensive training to help you coach your troop through the travel planning process. Power Point lecture with hands on activities.  
*Required of at least one adult volunteer working with a troop or group before planning an extended trip.* Does not have to be the troop leader or assistant troop leader. |
| Gain more knowledge and skills while working directly or indirectly with girls. | Any or all of our Enrichment Courses offered throughout the year: Take Action, Advanced Outdoor Cooking, Geocaching……and more! |
Knowing How Much You’re Appreciated

Whatever your volunteer position, your hard work means the world to girls, to your Council staff, and to Girl Scouts of the USA. We’re calling on all members of society to help girls reach their full potential, and you’ve answered that call, so thank you, from the bottom of our hearts. Check out the Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts Louisiana East adult awards at: www.gsle.org/en/for-volunteers/recognitions-and-awards.html.

Just as you will receive support throughout your volunteering experience, when you reach the end of the term you signed up for, you will talk with your support team about the positive parts of your experience, as well as the challenges you faced, and discuss whether you want to return in this position or try something new. The end of your troop year, camp season, overseas trip, or series/event session is just the beginning of your next adventure with Girl Scouting!

If you’re ready for more opportunities to work with girls, be sure to let your support team know how you’d like to be a part of girls’ lives in the future—whether in the same position or in other, flexible ways. Are you ready to organize a series or event? Take a trip? Work with girls at camp? Work with a troop of girls as a year-long volunteer? Share your skills at a Council office, working behind the scenes? The possibilities are endless, and can be tailored to fit your skills and interests.

Volunteer Appreciation Month

Volunteer Appreciation Week—a special week in April—is set aside especially for you. Girl Scouts pay tribute to the volunteers who help girls make the world a better place. The week centers on the long-standing National Girl Scout Leaders’ Day (April 22).

In addition, Girl Scouts also celebrates Volunteers Make a Difference Week, in conjunction with Make a Difference Day, which is the weekend in autumn that we set our clocks back.
Chapter 2: Girl Scouting as a National Experience

Now that you’re a Girl Scout volunteer, you belong to a network of more than 1 million adults who share an important commitment: to help Girl Scouts deliver its mission: building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. During your time as a volunteer, you will play an important role in building girl leaders by guiding girls through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). The GSLE is the foundation of all Girl Scout program activities, describing what girls do in Girl Scouts, how they do it, and how they will benefit from their participation.

Through our national curriculum, girls learn about themselves and their values, and stretch to seek and meet challenges beyond what they might in other settings. They also learn to connect with friends, family, and community to create positive relationships and band together on issues of importance to them. Girls are challenged to look and think critically at the world around them and consider how they can best address significant problems they are passionate about solving. When girls participate in the GSLE, they experience 5 measurable leadership benefits or “outcomes” – ultimately resulting in Girl Scouting achieving its mission. No matter where girls live or what their age or background, as Girl Scouts they are part of a powerful, national experience.

What Girl Scouting Does for Girls

Girl Scouting guides girls to become leaders in their daily lives, their communities, and the world—helping them become the kind of person exemplified by the Girl Scout Law. When girls—as the Girl Scout Law states—are “honest and fair,” when they “use resources wisely,” and know how to be “courageous and strong,” they can be more successful in everything they do. It may start in school and on sports teams, but research shows that the courage, confidence, and character they develop as Girl Scouts follows them throughout their lives. Girl Scouting has a practical approach to helping girls become leaders:

- When girls lead in their own lives, they Discover their values, skills, and the world around them. This helps them grow more confident and use their abilities to help themselves and others.
• When girls lead in their communities, they **Connect** with other people in a multicultural world. This helps them care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.

• When girls lead in the world, they **Take Action** to make the world a better place. They learn how to identify problems in their community and create solutions to fix them.

**Fun with Purpose**

Girl Scouting isn’t just about what we do; it’s also about how we do it. Girls will give almost any activity a try, as long as the volunteers guiding them take the right approach. Girl Scout activities ask adult volunteers to engage girls in three ways that make Girl Scouting unique from school and other extracurricular activities:

• **Girl led:** Girls of every grade level shape their experience by asking questions, sharing ideas, and using their imaginations. As a leader, allow girls to take an active role in making decisions and choosing activities. Of course, you’ll provide guidance appropriate to the age of the girls. But when girls play a critical role as decision makers in the planning and implementation of their activities, they are more engaged and active learners. Engagement is one of the most powerful determinants of success and well-being for people of any age.

• **Learning by doing:** This means hands-on learning that engages girls in an ongoing cycle of action and reflection. When girls actively participate in meaningful activities and later reflect on them, they obtain a deeper understanding of concepts and are more likely to master the skills the activities require. So make sure girls always have a chance to talk with each other—and you—after an activity. It doesn’t have to be formal, just get them talking and see what happens.

• **Cooperative learning:** Girls learn to share knowledge and skills in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation as they work together on a common goal. Great teamwork helps girls in school now and on the job later. Look for ways to help each girl contribute her unique talents and ideas to projects, help all girls see how their differences are valuable to the team, and coach girls to resolve their conflicts productively.

We call these three methods “processes.” You might be wondering how to put these processes into action with the girls in your group. These steps should help you get started:

1. After you help girls choose a National Leadership Journey (there’s more information about those **later in this chapter**), make sure you get the adult guide that accompanies the Journey. The 3 Girl Scout Processes are already built into the activities. When you do the activities as written, you are already using the processes. As you read through that guide, look at how the activities, conversations, and choice-making options are set up using the three processes. Once you start practicing the processes, you’ll probably find that they become second nature when you’re with girls.

2. If you haven’t already, watch **Girl Scouting 101**, our online introduction to volunteering with Girl Scouts. (Contact your council for the password.) If you’ve already watched Girl Scouting 101, you may want to review its “What Girl Scouts Do” section to brush up on the processes.

3. Want more detail about the processes? Watch “**Having Fun with Purpose: The 3 Processes of Girl Scouting**” to see the processes in action.

One last tip about using the processes: Girls’ time in Girl Scouting isn’t a to-do list, so please don’t ever feel that checking activities off a list is more important than tuning in to what interests and excites girls and sparks their imaginations. Projects don’t have to come out perfectly, and girls don’t have to fill their vests and sashes with badges: what matters most is the fun and learning that happens as girls make experiences their own.
5 Ways Girl Scouts Builds Girl Leaders

Girl Scouts’ mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Since 1912, girls have explored new fields of knowledge, learned valuable skills, and developed strong core values through Girl Scouts. Today Girl Scouts is, as it always has been, the organization best positioned to help girls develop important leadership skills they need to become successful adults.

At Girl Scouts, guided by supportive adults and peers, girls develop their leadership potential through age-appropriate activities that enable them to discover their values, skills, and the world around them; connect with others in a multicultural environment; and take action to make a difference in their world. These activities are designed to be girl led, cooperative, and hands-on—processes that create high-quality experiences conducive to learning.

When girls participate in Girl Scouts, they benefit in 5 important ways:

**STRONG SENSE OF SELF**
Girls have confidence in themselves and their abilities, and form positive identities.

**POSITIVE VALUES**
Girls act ethically, honestly, and responsibly, and show concern for others.

**CHALLENGE SEEKING**
Girls take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from mistakes.

**HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**
Girls develop and maintain healthy relationships by communicating their feelings directly and resolving conflicts constructively.

**COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING**
Girls desire to contribute to the world in purposeful and meaningful ways, learn how to identify problems in the community, and create “action plans” to solve them.
Why do these five outcomes matter?

When girls exhibit these attitudes and skills, they become responsible, productive, caring, and engaged citizens. But don’t take our word for it! Studies show that the development of attitudes, behaviors, and skills like confidence, conflict resolution, and problem solving are critical to well-being and rival academic and technical skills in their capacity to predict long-term positive life outcomes.

Youth who develop these five outcomes...

Are happier, healthier, and less likely to engage in problem behaviors or be victimized. Youth who develop competencies such as perseverance, positive self-esteem, and sociability have lower rates of obesity, depression, and aggression, and show greater life satisfaction and well-being than those who do not develop such attributes/skills.

Achieve more academically and feel more engaged in school. Youth who participate in programs that promote the attributes and skills linked with our five outcomes show stronger academic performance and school engagement compared to those who do not. When students are more self-aware and confident about their learning capabilities, they try harder and persist in the face of challenges.

Become strong job applicants. While employers want new hires to have technical knowledge related to a given job, those skills are not nearly as important as good teamwork, decision-making, and communication skills. Yet many employers around the world report that job candidates lack these attributes.

Become successful, well-adjusted adults. Kindergarteners who learn how to share, cooperate with others, and be helpful are more likely to have a college degree and a job 20 years later than youth who lack these social skills. They are also less likely to have substance-abuse problems and run-ins with the law.

Join Girl Scouts today! girlscouts.org

1 Child Trends. (2015). **Key “Soft Skills” that Foster Youth Workforce Success: Toward a Consensus across Fields.**
Top Reasons Why Girls Should Get Outdoors

Findings from the 2014 More than S'mores Report*

1. Girls really enjoy outdoor activities in Girl Scouts.
3. Girl Scouts who get outdoors are twice as likely to connect with and care for the environment than non-Girl Scouts.
4. Girls of color and girls in lower socioeconomic backgrounds report even stronger benefits from outdoor experiences.

“It was my first time on the water, in a lake. I was scared at first but when I started to paddle I got the hang of it. I really loved it.”

10-year-old Girl Scout, Missouri

Because of Girl Scouts...

71% of girls tried an outdoor activity for the first time.
48% of girls helped other girls do an outdoor activity.
71% of girls improved an outdoor skill.
29% of girls overcame a fear of an outdoor activity.

*More Than S’mores, a 2014 study by the Girl Scout Research Institute, talked to nearly 3,000 Girl Scouts in fourth-through-eighth-grade.

Start the fun now!
girlscouts.org/join
The National Program Portfolio

You’ll use several books, awards, and online resources to bring the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to life with girls. We strongly recommend that each girl has her own books from the National Program Portfolio. These books—the Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting—and national program awards—like badges and pins—are an important part of how Girl Scouting helps girls experience the power of millions of girls changing the world together.

As you use the National Program Portfolio with girls, keep in mind that Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) creates materials to serve our vast and diverse community of girls. To help bring topics off the page and into life, we sometimes provide girls and volunteers with suggestions about what people across the country and around the world are doing. We also sometimes make suggestions about movies, books, music, websites, and more that might spark girls’ interests.

At GSUSA, we know that not every example or suggestion we provide will work for every girl, family, volunteer, or community. In partnership with those who assist you with your Girl Scout group—including parents, faith groups, schools, and community organizations—we trust you to choose real-life topic experts from your community as well as movies, books, music, websites, and other opportunities that are most appropriate for the girls in your area to enrich their Girl Scout activities.

We are proud to be the premier leadership organization for girls. While girls and their families may have questions or interest in programming relevant to other aspects of girls’ lives, we are not always the organization best suited to offer such information. Your Council can recommend local organizations or resources that are best suited to do so.

Also note that GSUSA continuously reviews national program content to guarantee that all our resources are relevant and age appropriate, and that their content doesn’t include violence, sex, inappropriate language, or risky behavior. We value your input and hope that you will bring to your Council’s attention any content that concerns you.

National Leadership Journeys

National Leadership Journeys help Girl Scouts learn and practice the Three Keys, aid their communities, and earn leadership awards, progressing up Girl Scouting’s Ladder of Leadership as they do so.

In July, we are rolling out new Journeys in the VTK. These new Journeys are adding on to the choices that girls and volunteers already have. Every Journey (whether new or old) is topic-specific, includes hands-on activities, and incorporates Discover, Connect and a Take Action project. Depending upon the content, some Journeys are shorter and some are longer, but they have been made simpler to use and easier to deliver.

As of July 2017, the following Journeys are available for volunteers to choose from. They are:

- It’s Your Planet—Love It!
- It’s Your Story—Tell It!
- It’s Your World—Change It! (Daisies ONLY)
- Outdoor
- Think Like an Engineer
- Think Like a Programmer
- Think Like a Citizen Scientist

It’s Your World—Change It!:

- Available for purchase in council stores (adult guide and girl book) for Daisies—Ambassadors
• On the VTK for Daisies ONLY as part of a 15 meeting Year Plan

**It’s Your Planet—Love It:**
• Available for purchase in council stores (adult guide and girl book) for Daisies–Ambassadors
• On the VTK for Daisy, Brownie, and Junior as part of a 15 meeting Year Plan

**It’s Your Story—Tell It!:**
• Available for purchase in council stores (adult guide and girl book) for Daisies–Ambassadors
• On the VTK for Daisy, Brownie, and Junior as part of a 15 meeting Year Plan

**Outdoor:**
• Available on the VTK for Brownie and Junior as nine sessions in total, which includes three outdoor badges plus three Take Action meetings and is part of a 15 meeting Year Plan.
• Available on VTK for Daisies as seven sessions in total, which includes two outdoor badges plus three Take Action meetings and is part of a 15 meeting Year Plan.
• Available for Multi-level for Daisies-Juniors on the VTK.
• Cadette, Senior, Ambassador, and Multi-level will be available for Back to Troop as PDFs on the VTK.

**Think Like an Engineer:**
• Available on the VTK for Daisy, Brownie, Junior, and Multi-level. The Journey is six sessions in total, including three Take Action meetings, and is part of a 15 meeting Year Plan.

**Think Like a Programmer:**
• Available on the VTK for Daisy, Brownie, Junior, and Multi-level. The Journey is six sessions in total, including three Take Action meetings, and is part of a 15 meeting Year Plan.

**Think Like a Citizen Scientist:**
• Available on the VTK for Daisy, Brownie, Junior, and Multi-level. The Journey is six sessions in total, including three Take Action meetings, and is part of a 15 meeting Year Plan.

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**The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting and National Proficiency Badges**

In addition to the Leadership Journeys, girls at each Girl Scout grade level have their own edition of *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting*—a binder full of information about being a Girl Scout and how to earn certain badges, including ones about financial literacy and the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Girls who want to earn more badges can add a Skill Building Badge Set tied to the theme of the Journey they’ve chosen.

When a Girl Scout earns a badge, it shows that she’s learned a new skill, such as how to make a healthy snack or take great digital photos. It may even spark an interest at school or plant the seed for a future career. Please remember that we don’t expect you to be an expert in the badge topics; just have fun learning by doing with the girls!

While you’re having fun, keep in mind: Badges are for educating girls, not for decorating their sashes and vests. The quality of a girl’s experience—and the skills and pride she gains from earning leadership awards and skill-building badges—far outweigh the quantity of badges she earns.
Emblems and Patches

In addition to the leadership awards tied to the Journeys and the National Proficiency badges, girls can show they belong by adding emblems to the front of their vests or sashes and participation patches on the back.

- **Emblems** show membership in Girl Scouts, a particular Council, a particular troop, or in some other Girl Scout group. These can be worn on the front of a sash or vest (see the diagram in the handbook section of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* to see where these are placed).

- **Participation patches** represent activities girls have tried and are fun ways for girls to remember special events they've attended. Since these patches and pins aren't tied to skill-building activities, they are worn on the back of a girl's sash or vest.

You can purchase emblems and patches—along with badges and leadership awards—at our Council’s Girl Scout shop or by visiting the GSUSA online shop ([http://www.girlscoutshop.com/gsusaonline/](http://www.girlscoutshop.com/gsusaonline/)). There, you'll find a cool list of the earned awards for each grade level and a link that shows you exactly where girls can place their emblems, awards, badges, pins, and patches on their vests and sashes.

Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards

The Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards are Girl Scouting’s highest awards. These awards offer girls relevant grade-level-appropriate challenges related to teamwork, goal setting, community networking and leadership. They also engage girls in building networks that not only support the recipient in their award projects, but in new educational and career opportunities.

Like everything girls do in Girl Scouting, the steps to earning these awards are rooted in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. This is why, to earn each of these awards, girls first complete a grade-level Journey (two Journeys for the Gold Award or a Silver Award and one Journey). With Journeys, girls experience the keys to leadership and learn to identify community needs, work in partnership with their communities, and carry out Take-Action projects that make a lasting difference. They can then use the skills they developed during a Journey to develop and execute projects for their Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. Girl Scouts has just introduced a web application that takes girls step-by-step through the Gold Award requirements. Visit [http://www.girlscouts.org/program/highest_awards/gold_award.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/highest_awards/gold_award.asp) to take a peek.

Did you know that a Girl Scout who has earned her Gold Award immediately rises one rank in all four branches of the U.S. Military? A number of college scholarship opportunities also await Gold Award designees. A girl does not, however, have to earn a Bronze or Silver Award before earning the Girl Scout Gold Award. She is eligible to earn any recognition at the grade level in which she is registered.

As a Girl Scout volunteer, encourage girls to go for it by earning these awards at the Junior through Ambassador levels. Consult with Council program staff to learn about some of the award projects girls in our Council are doing and talk to a few past recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award. You will be inspired when you see and hear what girls can accomplish as leaders—and by the confidence, values, and team-building expertise they gain while doing so. And imagine the impact girls have on their communities, country, and even the world as they identify problems they care about, team with others, and act to make change happen!

All this, of course, starts with you—a Girl Scout volunteer! Encourage girls to go after Girl Scouting’s highest awards—information, adult guidelines, and trainings offered are available at [www.gsle.org/en/about-girl-scouts/our-program/highest-awards.html](http://www.gsle.org/en/about-girl-scouts/our-program/highest-awards.html).
A Tradition of Honoring Girls

From the beginning of Girl Scouts, one prestigious award has recognized the girls who make a difference in their communities and in their own lives. The first of these awards, in 1916, was the Golden Eagle of Merit. In 1919, the name changed to The Golden Eaglet, and in 1920, the requirements for The Golden Eaglet were updated. The First Class Award existed for only two years, from 1938–1940, and was replaced in 1940 with The Curved Bar Award, the requirements for which were updated in 1947. In 1963, GSUSA re-introduced the First Class Award, for a girl who was an “all-around” person, with skills in many fields and a proficiency in one. Today’s highest award, the Girl Scout Gold Award, was introduced in 1980.

Other Initiatives and Opportunities

Other exciting initiatives and opportunities exist to support the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. In the past, these have covered topics like the environment, robotics, and space exploration. You can find out how to engage your group in opportunities like these by visiting our Council website, www.gsle.org, and/or reviewing our current Program Pathway publication.
Girl Scout Traditions and Celebrations

Throughout the long history of Girl Scouts, certain traditions remain meaningful and important and are still practiced today. This section gives you an overview of annual celebrations in the Girl Scout year, as well as other revered Girl Scout traditions. Be sure to look in *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* and Leadership Journeys for more information on songs, outdoor activities, historical anecdotes, traditions, and ceremonies.

**Girl Scout Calendar**

Girl Scouts celebrate several special days each year, which you’re encouraged to include in your group planning.

- **February 22:** World Thinking Day (the birthday of both Lord Baden-Powell and Lady Olave Baden-Powell, the originators of Boy Scouts and the Scouting Movement worldwide).
- **March 12:** The birthday of Girl Scouting in the USA. The first troop meeting was held in Savannah, Georgia, on this date in 1912. Note that Girl Scout Week begins the Sunday before March 12 (a day known as “Girl Scout Sunday”) and extends through the Saturday following March 12 (a day known as “Girl Scout Sabbath”).
- **April:** Volunteer Appreciation Week centers on the long-standing National Girl Scout Leaders’ Day (April 22), but expands the definition of volunteers beyond troop leaders to include all the volunteers who work in so many ways on behalf of girls in Girl Scouting.
- **October 31:** Founder’s Day (Juliette Gordon Low’s birthday).

**World Thinking Day: February 22**

World Thinking Day, first created in 1926, offers a special day for Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from around the world to “think” of each other and give thanks and appreciation to their sister Girl Scouts. February 22 is the mutual birthday of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout movement, and his wife, Olave, who served as World Chief Guide.

Today, girls honor World Thinking Day by earning the World Thinking Day award, which focuses on an annual theme selected by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. They also show their appreciation and friendship on World Thinking Day not only by extending warm wishes but also by contributing to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, which helps offer Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting to more girls and young women worldwide.

**Time-Honored Ceremonies**

Ceremonies play an important part in Girl Scouts and are used not only to celebrate accomplishments, experience time-honored traditions, and reinforce the values of the Promise and Law, but also to encourage girls to take a short pause in their busy lives and connect with their fellow Girl Scouts in fun and meaningful ways. Many examples of ceremonies—for awards, meeting openings and closings—are sewn right into the Journey, including ideas for new ceremonies girls can create.

Girls use ceremonies for all sorts of reasons. Here’s a brief list, in alphabetical order, follows, so that you can become familiar with the most common Girl Scout ceremonies:

- **Bridging** ceremonies mark a girl’s move from one age level of Girl Scouting to another, such as from Junior to Cadette. (Note that Fly-Up is a special bridging ceremony for Girl Scout Brownies who are bridging to Juniors.)
• **Closing** ceremonies finalize the meeting, with expectations for the next. A closing ceremony may be as simple as a hand squeeze while standing in a circle.

• **Court of Awards** is a time to recognize girls who have accomplished something spectacular during the Girl Scout year.

• **Flag** ceremonies can be part of any activity that honors the American flag.

• **Girl Scout Bronze (or Silver or Gold) Award** ceremonies honors Girl Scout Juniors who have earned the Girl Scout Bronze Award (Cadettes who have earned the Silver Award; Seniors or Ambassadors who have earned the Gold Award), and are usually held for a group and combined with Council recognition.

• **Girl Scouts’ Own** is a girl-led program that allows girls to explore their feelings and beliefs around a topic (such as the importance of friendship or the personal meaning they get from Girl Scout Promise and Law) using the spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other methods of expression. It is never a religious ceremony.

• **Investiture** welcomes new members, girls or adults, into the Girl Scout family for the first time. Girls receive their Girl Scout, Brownie Girl Scout, or Daisy Girl Scout pin at this time.

• **Opening** ceremonies start troop meetings and can also begin other group meetings.

• **Pinning** ceremonies help celebrate when girls receive grade-level Girl Scout pins.

• **Rededication** ceremonies are opportunities for girls and adults to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

For more information about Girl Scout Ceremonies, you can purchase the “Let’s Celebrate” book available at our Council shop(s) at [www.gsle.org/shop](http://www.gsle.org/shop).

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**Hosting a Girl-Led Event**

If you’re working with girls who want to host an event—large or small—be sure girls are leading the event-planning, instead of sitting by passively while you or another adult plans the event. To get girls started, ask them to think about the following questions:

• What sort of event do we have in mind?
• Who is our intended audience?
• Will it be outdoors?
• Does the audience have to be invited - or can anyone come?
• What’s our main topic or focus?
• What’s our objective—what do we hope to accomplish at the end of the day?
• Will one or more speakers need to be invited? If so, who? How do we find speakers?
• Where will the event take place?
• Is there a charge for this venue?
• Is the venue large enough to accommodate the audience?
• Do we have to obtain permission to use this venue? If so, from whom?
• Are there adequate facilities for the audience? If not, how much will extra portable toilets cost, and how many do we need?
• Is there adequate parking or a drop-off point for girls?
• Do we need tables? chairs? podiums? microphones? speakers?
• What sort of entertainment will we provide?
• Will we provide or sell refreshments? If so, what kinds?
• How many chaperones will we need? Who will we ask?
• What emergency care do we need to plan for? Is the event large enough that local police and fire departments need to be notified?
• Do we need to purchase additional insurance for non-Girl Scouts?
• How will we advertise the event?
• What decorations will we use?
• Will we give away any keepsakes?
• Will we charge for the event?
• Who will set up the event?
• Who will clean up after the event?
• How will we determine whether the event was a success?

Ideas for girl-led events with family, friends, and community experts are also available in the Leadership Journey adult guides!

**Signs, Songs, Handshake, and More!**

Over time, any organization is going to develop a few common signals that everyone understands. Such is the case with Girl Scouts, which has developed a few unique ways to greet, acknowledge, and communicate, some of which are listed here.

**Girl Scout Sign**

The idea of the sign came from the days of chivalry, when armed knights greeted friendly knights by raising the right hand, palm open, as a sign of friendship. To give the sign yourself, raise the three middle fingers of the right hand palm forward and shoulder high (the three extended fingers represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise). Girls give the sign when they:

• Say the Promise or Law.
• Are welcomed into Girl Scouts at an investiture ceremony that welcomes new members.
• Receive an award, patch, pin, or other recognition.
• Greet or welcome other Girl Scouts and Girl Guides.

**Girl Scout Handshake**

The handshake is a formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts, and is the appropriate way to receive an award. Shake left hands and give the Girl Scout Sign with your right hand.

**Quiet Sign**

The quiet sign can be extremely useful to you as a volunteer, so teach it to girls during your first meeting. Raise your right hand high with an open palm. As girls in the group see the sign, they stop talking and also raise their hands. Once everyone is silent, the meeting can begin.

**Girl Scout Slogan and Motto**

The Girl Scout slogan is, “Do a good turn daily.” The Girl Scout motto is, “Be prepared.”
Songs

Whether singing around a campfire or joining a chorus of voices on the Mall in Washington, D.C., Girl Scouts have always enjoyed the fun and fellowship that music creates. In fact, the first Girl Scout Song Book, a collection of songs put together by girl members, was published in 1925.

Songs can be used to open or close meetings, enhance ceremonies, lighten a load while hiking, or share a special moment with other Girl Scouts. For tips on choosing and leading songs, go to http://gsuniversity.girlscouts.org/resource/song-leading-workshops/. A variety of songbooks are also available for purchase. Check out our online Council shop at www.gsle.org/shop.
Chapter 3: Engaging Girls at All Grade Levels

As a Girl Scout volunteer, you’ll have the opportunity to guide girls of all backgrounds, behaviors, skills, and abilities. You’ll help her develop leadership skills she can use now and as she grows—all in a safe and accepting environment. This chapter gives you tips for doing just that.

Arranging a Time and Place for Girl-Led Meetings

When and how often to meet is up to you and your co-volunteers’ parents, and girls. It may just be a one-time program meeting for this particular group of girls. Or, if you meet regularly, what day and times work best for the girls, for you, for your co-volunteer(s), and for other adults who will be presenting or mentoring? Once per week, twice a month, or once a month? Is after-school best? Can your co-volunteers meet at that time, or will meetings work better in the evenings or on the weekends?

Where to meet can be a bit trickier. A meeting place needs to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment that allows for the participation of all girls. You might consider using meeting rooms at schools, libraries, houses of worship, community buildings, childcare facilities, and local businesses. For teens, you can also rotate meetings at coffee shops, bookstores, and other places girls enjoy spending time. Meetings in the home are not allowed.

Here are a few points to keep in mind as you consider meeting locations:

- **Cost:** The space should be free to use.
- **Size:** Make sure the space is large enough to accommodate the whole group and all planned activities.
- **Availability:** Be sure the space is available day and the entire length of time you want to meet.
- **Resources:** Determine what types of furnishings (table? chairs?) come with the room and ensure that the lighting is adequate. A bonus would be a cubby of some sort, where you can store supplies.
- **Safety:** Ensure that the space is safe, secure, clean, properly ventilated, heated (or cooled, depending on your location), free from hazards, and has at least two exits that are well-marked and fully functional. Also be sure first-aid equipment is on hand.
- **Facilities:** Sanitary and accessible toilets are critical.
- **Communication-friendly:** Be sure your cell phone works in the meeting space.
- **Allergen-free:** Ensure that pet dander and other common allergens won’t bother susceptible girls during meetings.
- **Accessibility:** Be sure the space can accommodate girls with disabilities, as well as parents with disabilities who may come to meetings.

If this is your first time asking for a Girl Scout meeting place, here are a few speaking points to get you started: “I’m a Girl Scout volunteer, with a group of ______ girls. We’re doing lots of great things for girls and for the community, like ____ and ______. We’re all about leadership—the kind that girls use in their daily lives and the kind that makes our community better. We’d love to hold our meetings here because ______.”

**Girl Scout Group Size**

Girl Scout groups are large enough to provide a cooperative learning environment and small enough to allow for development of individual girls. It is recommended that group sizes, when possible, are as follows:

- Girl Scout Daisies: 5-12 girls
- Girl Scout Brownies: 10-20 girls
- Girl Scout Juniors 10-25 girls
- Girl Scout Cadettes: 5-25 girls
• Girl Scout Seniors: 5-30 girls
• Girl Scout Ambassadors: 5-30 girls

A Girl Scout troop/group must have at minimum, five girls and two approved adult volunteers. Adults and girls registering in groups of less than five girls and/or two approved, unrelated adult volunteers at least one of whom is female, will be registered as individual Girl Scouts to more accurately reflect their status and experience. Individual girls are still welcome to participate in Girl Scout activities and events.

Understanding Healthy Development in Girls

Just being attentive to what girls are experiencing as they mature is a big help to girls. So take some time to understand the likes, needs, and abilities of girls at different ages.

As you listen and learn along with girls, you may find it useful to review the highlights of their development. What follows are the developmental abilities and needs of girls at various grade levels. You will also find these listed in the adult guide of each Leadership Journey. Plus, activities in the Journeys are set up with the following guidelines in mind! Of course, each girl is an individual, so these are only guidelines that help you get to know the girls.

GSRI reports in More than ‘Smores that participating in casual outdoor activities in Girl Scouts, like playing, walking, or taking field trips in the outdoors made girls stronger problem solvers and challenge seekers. These outdoor experiences often place girls in new physical, psychological, and social situations that motivate curiosity and foster a sense of discovery. These challenges “require girls to become more self-aware and to cooperate, communicate, and solve problems.” (2014, page. 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Girl Scout Daisies</strong></th>
<th><strong>At the Girl Scout Daisy level (kindergarten and first grade), girls . . .</strong></th>
<th><strong>This means . . .</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have loads of energy and need to run, walk, and play outside.</td>
<td>They will enjoy going on nature walks and outdoor scavenger hunts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are great builders and budding artists, though they are still developing their fine motor skills.</td>
<td>Encouraging them to express themselves and their creativity by making things with their hands. Girls may need assistance holding scissors, cutting in a straight line, and so on.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Love to move and dance.</td>
<td>They might especially enjoy marching like a penguin, dancing like a dolphin, or acting out how they might care for animals in the jungle.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are concrete thinkers and focused on the here and now.</td>
<td>Showing instead of telling, for example, about how animals are cared for. Plan visits to animal shelters, farms, or zoos; meet care providers; or make a creative bird feeder.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are only beginning to learn about basic number concepts, time, and money.</td>
<td>You will want to take opportunities to count out supplies together—and, perhaps, the legs on a caterpillar!</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Are just beginning to write and spell and they don’t always have the words for what they’re thinking or feeling.</td>
<td>That having girls draw a picture of something they are trying to communicate is easier and more meaningful for them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know how to follow simple directions and respond well to recognition for doing so.</td>
<td>Being specific and offering only one direction at a time. Acknowledge when girls have followed directions well to increase their motivation to listen and follow again.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Brownies</strong></td>
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<td><strong>At the Girl Scout Brownie level (second and third grade), girls . . .</strong></td>
<td><strong>This means . . .</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have lots of energy and need to run, walk, and play outside.</td>
<td>Taking your session activities outside whenever possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are social and enjoy working in groups.</td>
<td>Allowing girls to team up in small or large groups for art projects and performances.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Want to help others and appreciate being given individual responsibilities for a task.</td>
<td>Letting girls lead, direct, and help out in activities whenever possible. Allow girls as a group to make decisions about individual roles and responsibilities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are concrete thinkers and focused on the here and now.</td>
<td>Doing more than just reading to girls about the Brownie Elf’s adventures. Ask girls questions to gauge their understanding and allow them to role play their own pretend visit to a new country.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need clear directions and structure, and like knowing what to expect.</td>
<td>Offering only one direction at a time. Also, have girls create the schedule and flow of your get-togethers and share it at the start.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are becoming comfortable with basic number concepts, time, money, and distance.</td>
<td>Offering support only when needed. Allow girls to set schedules for meetings or performances, count out money for a trip, and so on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are continuing to develop their fine motor skills and can tie shoes, use basic tools, begin to sew, etc.</td>
<td>Encouraging girls to express themselves and their creativity by making things with their hands. Girls may need some assistance, however, holding scissors, threading needles, and so on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.</td>
<td>That girls might like to create a play about welcoming a new girl to their school, or tell a story through dance or creative movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know how to follow rules, listen well, and appreciate recognition of a job done well.</td>
<td>Acknowledging when the girls have listened or followed the directions well, which will increase their motivation for listening and following again!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Girl Scout Juniors</strong></td>
<td><strong>This means . . .</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>At the Girl Scout Junior level (fourth and fifth grades), girls . . .</strong></td>
<td><strong>Whenever possible, allowing girls to make decisions and express their opinions through guided discussion and active reflection activities. Also, have girls set rules for listening to others’ opinions and offering assistance in decision making.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Want to make decisions and express their opinions.</td>
<td><strong>Whenever possible, allowing girls to make decisions and express their opinions through guided discussion and active reflection activities. Also, have girls set rules for listening to others’ opinions and offering assistance in decision making.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are social and enjoy doing things in groups.</td>
<td><strong>Allowing girls to team-up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are aware of expectations and sensitive to the judgments of others.</td>
<td><strong>That although it’s okay to have expectations, the expectation is not perfection! Share your own mistakes and what you learned from them, and be sure to create an environment where girls can be comfortable sharing theirs.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are concerned about equity and fairness.</td>
<td><strong>Not shy ing away from discussing why rules are in place, and having girls develop their own rules for their group.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are beginning to think abstractly and critically, and are capable of flexible thought. Juniors can consider more than one perspective, as well as the feelings and attitudes of another.</td>
<td><strong>Asking girls to explain why they made a decision, share their visions of their roles in the future, and challenge their own and others’ perspectives.</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have strong fine and gross motor skills and coordination.</td>
<td><strong>Engaging girls in exercising their minds and their bodies. Allow girls to express themselves through written word, choreograph.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.</td>
<td><strong>That girls might like to tell a story through playwriting, playing an instrument, or choreographing a dance.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>May be starting puberty, which means beginning breast development, skin changes, and weight changes. Some may be starting menstruation.</td>
<td><strong>Being sensitive to girls’ changing bodies, possible discomfort over these changes, and their desire for more information. Create an environment that acknowledges and celebrates this transition as healthy and normal for girls.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes</td>
<td>This means . . .</td>
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<tr>
<td>At the Girl Scout Cadette level (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades), girls . . .</td>
<td>Being sensitive to the many changes Cadettes are undergoing—and acknowledging that these changes are as normal as growing taller! Girls need time to adapt to their changing bodies, and their feelings about their bodies may not keep up. Reinforce that, as with everything else, people go through puberty in different ways and at different times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are going through puberty, including changes in their skin, body-shape, and weight. They’re also starting their menstrual cycles and have occasional shifts in mood.</td>
<td>That girls will enjoy teaming-up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities, as well as tackling relationship issues through both artistic endeavors and take-action projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are starting to spend more time in peer groups than with their families and are very concerned about friends and relationships with others their age.</td>
<td>Encouraging girls to share, but only when they are comfortable. At this age, they may be more comfortable sharing a piece of artwork or a fictional story than their own words. Throughout the activities, highlight and discuss differences as positive, interesting, and beautiful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can be very self-conscious—wanting to be like everyone else, but fearing they are unique in their thoughts and feelings.</td>
<td>Trusting girls to plan and make key decisions, allowing them to experience what’s known as “fun failure.” Girls learn from trying something new and making mistakes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are beginning to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home.</td>
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<td>Girl Scout Seniors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>At the Girl Scout Senior level (ninth and tenth grades), girls . . .</strong></td>
<td><strong>This means . . .</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are beginning to clarify their own values, consider alternative points of view on controversial issues, and see multiple aspects of a situation.</td>
<td>Asking girls to explain the reasoning behind their decisions. Engage girls in role-play and performances, where others can watch and offer alternative solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have strong problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and are able to plan and reflect on their own learning experiences.</td>
<td>That girls are more than able to go beyond community service to develop projects that will create sustainable solutions in their communities. Be sure to have girls plan and follow up on these experiences through written and discussion-based reflective activities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spend more time in peer groups than with their families and are very concerned about friends and relationships with others their age.</td>
<td>That girls will enjoy teaming up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities. They will also want to tackle relationship issues through both artistic endeavors and take-action projects. Alter the makeup of groups with each activity so that girls interact with those they might not usually pair up with.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequently enjoy expressing their individuality.</td>
<td>Encouraging girls to express their individuality in their dress, creative expression, and thinking. Remind girls frequently that there isn’t just one way to look, feel, think, or act. Assist girls in coming up with new ways of expressing their individuality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel they have lots of responsibilities and pressures—from home, school, peers, and work.</td>
<td>Acknowledging girls’ pressures and sharing how stress can limit health, creativity, and productivity. Help girls release stress through creative expression, movement, and more traditional stress-reduction techniques.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are continuing to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home.</td>
<td>Trusting girls to plan and make key decisions, allowing them to experience what’s known as “fun failure.” Girls learn from trying something new and making mistakes.</td>
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</table>
### Girl Scout Ambassadors

**At the Girl Scout Ambassador level (eleventh and twelfth grades), girls . . .**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>This means . . .</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can see the complexity of situations and controversial issues—they understand that problems often have no clear solution and that varying points of view may each have merit.</td>
<td>Inviting girls to develop stories as a group, and then individually create endings that they later discuss and share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have strong problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, and can adapt logical thinking to real-life situations. Ambassadors recognize and incorporate practical limitations to solutions.</td>
<td>That girls are more than able to go beyond community service to develop projects that will create sustainable solutions in their communities. Be sure to have girls plan and follow up on these experiences through written and discussion-based reflective activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend more time with peers than with their families and are very concerned about friends and relationships with others their age.</td>
<td>That girls will enjoy teaming up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities. They will also want to tackle relationship issues through both artistic endeavors and take-action projects. Alter the makeup of groups with each activity so that girls interact with those they might not usually pair up with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently enjoy expressing their individuality.</td>
<td>Encouraging girls to express their individuality in their dress, creative expression, and thinking. Remind girls frequently that there isn’t just one way to look, feel, think, or act. Assist girls in coming up with new ways of expressing their individuality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel they have lots of responsibilities and pressures—from home, school, peers, work, etc.</td>
<td>Acknowledging girls’ pressures and sharing how stress can limit health, creativity, and productivity. Help girls release stress through creative expression, movement, and more traditional stress-reduction techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are continuing to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home—and are looking to their futures.</td>
<td>Trusting girls to plan and make key decisions, allowing them to experience what’s known as “fun failure.” Girls learn from trying something new and making mistakes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating a Safe Space for Girls

A safe space is one in which girls feel as though they can be themselves, without explanation, judgment, or ridicule. Girl Scout research shows that girls are looking for an emotionally safe environment, where confidentiality is respected and they can express themselves without fear.

The environment you create, is as important – maybe more – than the activities girls do. It’s the key to developing the sort of group that girls want to join. The following sections share tips on creating a warm, safe environment for girls.

Girl-Adult Partnership

Girl Scouting is for the enjoyment and benefit of the girls, so meetings are built around girls’ ideas. When you put the girls first, you’re helping develop a team relationship, making space for the development of leadership skills, and allowing girls to benefit from the guidance, mentoring, and coaching of caring adults.

The three Girl Scout processes (girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning) are integral to the girl-adult partnership. Take time to read about processes and think about how to incorporate them into your group’s experiences. (See the “Girl Scouting as a National Experience” chapter of this handbook for more about using the Journey adult guides.)

Recognizing and Supporting Each Girl

Girls look up to their volunteers. They need to know that you consider each of them an important person. They can survive a poor meeting place or an activity that flops, but they cannot endure being ignored or rejected. Recognize acts of trying as well as instances of clear success. Emphasize the positive qualities that make each girl worthy and unique. Be generous with praise and stingy with rebuke. Help girls find ways to show acceptance of and support for one another.

Promoting Fairness

Girls are sensitive to injustice. They forgive mistakes if they are sure you are trying to be fair. They look for fairness in the ways responsibilities are shared, in handling of disagreements and in responses to performance and accomplishment. When possible, consult girls as to what they think is fair before decisions are made. Explain your reasoning and show why you did something. Be willing to apologize if needed. Try to see that the responsibilities, as well as the chances for feeling important, are equally divided. Help girls explore and decide for themselves the fair way of solving problems, carrying out activities, and responding to behavior and accomplishments.

Building Trust

Girls need your belief in them and your support when they try new things. They must be sure you will not betray a confidence. Show girls you trust them to think for themselves and use their own judgment. Help them make the important decisions in the group. Help them correct their own mistakes. Help girls give and show trust toward one another. Help them see how trust can be built, lost, regained, and strengthened.
Managing Conflict

Conflicts and disagreements are an inevitable part of life. When handled constructively they can actually enhance communication and relationships. At the very least, Girl Scouts are expected to practice self-control and diplomacy so that conflicts does not erupt into regrettable incidents. Shouting, verbal abuse, or physical confrontations are never warranted and cannot be tolerated in the Girl Scout environment.

When a conflict arises between girls or a girl and a volunteer, get those involved to sit down together and talk calmly and in a nonjudgmental manner. (Each party may need some time—a few days or a week—to calm down before being able to do this.) Although talking in this way can be uncomfortable and difficult, it does lay the groundwork for working well together in the future. Whatever you do, do not spread your complaint around to others—that won’t help the situation and causes only embarrassment and anger.

If a conflict persists, be sure you explain the matter to your volunteer community administrator or support team. If the supervisor cannot resolve the issues satisfactorily (or if the problem involves the supervisor), the issue can be taken to the next level of supervision and, ultimately, contact your Council staff representative if you need extra help.

Inspiring Open Communication

Girls want someone who will listen to what they think, feel, and want to do. They like having someone they can talk to about important things, including things that might not seem important to adults. Listen to the girls. Respond with words and actions. Speak your mind openly when you are happy or concerned about something, and encourage girls to do this, too. Leave the door open for girls to seek advice, share ideas and feelings, and propose plans or improvements. Help girls see how open communication can result in action, discovery, better understanding of self and others, and a more comfortable climate for fun and accomplishment.

Communicating Effectively with Girls of Any Age

When communicating with girls, consider the following tips:

- **Listen**: Listening to girls, as opposed to telling them what to think, feel, or do is the first step in helping them take ownership of their program.
- **Be honest**: If you’re not comfortable with a topic or activity, say so. No one expects you to be an expert on every topic. Ask for alternatives or seek out volunteers with the required expertise. Owning up to mistakes—and apologizing for them—goes a long way with girls.
- **Be open to real issues**: For girls, important topics are things like relationships, peer pressure, school, money, drugs, and other serious issues. You will also have plenty of time to discuss less weighty subjects. When you don’t know, listen. Also seek help from your Council if you need assistance or more information than you currently have.
- **Show respect**: Girls often say that their best experiences were the ones where adults treated them as equal partners. Being spoken to as a young adult helps them grow.
- **Offer options**: Providing flexibility in changing needs and interests shows that you respect the girls and their busy lives. But whatever option is chosen, girls at every grade level also want guidance and parameters.
- **Stay current**: Be aware of the TV shows girls watch, movies they like, books and magazines they read, and music they listen to—not to pretend you have the same interests, but to show you’re interested in their world.
One way to communicate with girls is through the LUTE method—listen, understand, tolerate, and empathize. Here is a breakdown of the acronym LUTE to remind you of how to respond when a girl is upset, angry, or confused.

- **L = Listen**: Hear her out, ask for details, and reflect back what you hear, such as, “What happened next?” or “What did she say?”
- **U = Understand**: Try to be understanding of her feelings, with comments such as, “So what I hear you saying is . . .” “I’m sure that upset you,” “I understand why you’re unhappy,” and “Your feelings are hurt; mine would be, too.”
- **T = Tolerate**: You can tolerate the feelings that she just can’t handle right now on her own. It just signifies that you can listen and accept how she is feeling about the situation. Say something like: “Try talking to me about it. I’ll listen,” “I know you’re mad—talking it out helps,” and “I can handle it—say whatever you want to.”
- **E = Empathize**: Let her know you can imagine feeling what she’s feeling, with comments such as, “I’m sure that really hurts” or “I can imagine how painful this is for you.”

**Addressing the Needs of Older Girls**

Consider the following tips when working with teenage girls:

- Think of yourself as a partner and as a coach or mentor, as needed (not a “leader”).
- Ask girls what rules they need for safety and what group agreements they need to be a good team.
- Understand that girls need time to talk, unwind, and have fun together.
- Ask what they think and what they want to do.
- Encourage girls to speak their minds.
- Provide structure, but don’t micromanage.
- Give everyone a voice in the group.
- Treat girls like partners.
- Don’t repeat what’s said in the group to anyone outside of it (unless necessary for the girl’s safety).

**Girl Scout Research Institute**

It’s amazing what you can learn when you listen to girls.

Since its founding in 2000, the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) has become an internationally recognized center for research and public policy information on the development and well-being of girls. Not just Girl Scouts, but all girls.

In addition to research staff, the GSRI draws on experts in child development, education, business, government, and the not-for-profit sector. We provide the youth development field with definitive research reviews that consolidate existing studies. And, by most measures, we are now the leading source of original research into the issues that girls face and the social trends that affect their lives.

Visit [www.girlscouts.org/research](http://www.girlscouts.org/research).
When Sensitive Topics Come Up

According to Feeling Safe: What Girls Say, a 2003 Girl Scout Research Institute study, girls are looking for groups that allow connection and a sense of close friendship. They want volunteers who are teen savvy and can help them with issues they face, such as bullying, peer pressure, dating, athletic and academic performance, and more. Some of these issues may be considered “sensitive” by parents, and they may have opinions or input about how, and whether, Girl Scouts should cover these topics should be covered with their daughters.

Girl Scouts welcomes and serves girls and families from a wide spectrum of faiths and cultures. When girls wish to participate in discussions or activities that could be considered sensitive—even for some—put the topic on hold until you have spoken with parents and received guidance from your Council.

When Girl Scout activities involve sensitive issues, your role is that of a caring adult who can help girls acquire skills and knowledge in a supportive atmosphere, not someone who advocates a particular position.

You should know, GSUSA does not take a position or develop materials on issues relating to human sexuality, birth control, or abortion. We feel our role is to help girls develop self-confidence and good decision-making skills that will help them make wise choices in all areas of their lives. We believe parents and guardians, along with schools and faith communities, are the primary sources of information on these topics.

We at Girl Scouts Louisiana East defers to parents/guardians to make all decisions regarding their girl’s participation in Girl Scout program that may be of a sensitive nature. As a volunteer leader, you must get written parental permission for any locally planned program offering that could be considered sensitive. Included on the permission form should be the topic of the activity, any specific content that might create controversy, and any action steps the girls will take when the activity is complete. Be sure to have a form for each girl, and keep the forms on hand in case a problem arises. For activities not sponsored by Girl Scouts, find out in advance (from organizers or other volunteers who may be familiar with the content) what will be presented, and follow your Council’s guidelines for obtaining written permission.

Report concerns: There may be times when you worry about the health and well-being of girls in your group. Alcohol, drugs, sex, bullying, abuse, depression, and eating disorders are some of the issues girls may encounter. You are on the frontlines of girls’ lives, and you are in a unique position to identify a situation in which a girl may need help. If you believe a girl is at risk of hurting herself or others, your role is to promptly bring that information to her parent/guardian or the Council so she can get the expert assistance she needs. Your concern about a girl’s well-being and safety is taken seriously, and your Council will guide you in addressing these concerns.

- Contact a staff member at your Girl Scout Council and find out how to refer the girl and her parent/guardian to experts at school or in the community.
- Share your concern with the girl’s family, if this is feasible.

Here are a few signs that could indicate a girl needs expert help:

- Marked changes in behavior or personality (for example, unusual moodiness, aggressiveness, or sensitivity)
- Declining academic performance and/or inability to concentrate
- Withdrawal from school, family activities, or friendships
- Fatigue, apathy, or loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities
- Sleep disturbances
- Increased secretiveness
- Deterioration in appearance and personal hygiene
- Eating extremes, unexplained weight loss, distorted body image
• Tendency toward perfectionism
• Giving away prized possessions; preoccupation with the subject of death
• Unexplained injuries such as bruises, burns, or fractures
• Avoidance of eye contact or physical contact
• Excessive fearfulness or distrust of adults
• Abusive behavior toward other children, especially younger ones

**Working with Parents and Guardians**

Most parents and guardians are helpful and supportive and sincerely appreciate your time and effort on behalf of their daughters. You almost always have the same goal, which is to make Girl Scouting an enriching experience for their girls. Encourage them to check out www.girlscouts4girls.org to find out how to expand their roles as advocates for their daughters.
Advocating for Girls

The Girl Scouts Public Policy and Advocacy Office in Washington, D.C., builds relationships with members of Congress, White House officials, and other federal departments and agencies, continuously informing and educating them about issues important to girls and Girl Scouting. The office also supports Girl Scout Council at the state and local levels, as they build capacity to be the voice for girls. These advocacy efforts help demonstrate to lawmakers that Girl Scouts is a resource and an authority on issues affecting girls. Visit the Advocacy office at www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/advocacy.

Using “I” Statements

Perhaps the most important tip for communicating with parents/guardians is for you to use “I” statements instead of “you” statements. “I” statements, which are detailed in the aMAZE Journey for Girl Scout Cadettes, tell someone what you need from her or him, while “you” statements may make the person feel defensive.

Here are some examples of “you” statements:

- “Your daughter just isn’t responsible.”
- “You’re not doing your share.”

Now look at “I” statements:

- “I’d like to help your daughter learn to take more responsibility.”
- “I’d really appreciate your help with registration.”

If you need help with specific scenarios involving parents/guardians, try the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a Parent or Guardian . . .</th>
<th>You Can Say . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is uninvolved and asks how she can help but seems to have no idea of how to follow through or take leadership of even the smallest activity</td>
<td>“I do need your help. Here are some written guidelines on how to prepare for our camping trip.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantly talks about all the ways you could make the group better</td>
<td>“I need your leadership. Project ideas you would like to develop and lead can fit in well with our plan. Please put your ideas in writing, and perhaps I can help you carry them out.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tells you things like, “Denise’s mother is on welfare, and Denise really doesn’t belong in this group”</td>
<td>“I need your sensitivity. Girl Scouting is for all girls, and by teaching your daughter to be sensitive to others’ feelings you help teach the whole group sensitivity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifts parental responsibilities to you and is so busy with her own life that she allows no time to help</td>
<td>“I love volunteering for Girl Scouts and want to make a difference. If you could take a few moments from your busy schedule to let me know what you value about what we’re doing, I’d appreciate it. It would keep me going for another year.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Arranging Meetings with Parents/Guardians or a Friends-and-Family Network

A parent/guardian meeting, or a meeting of your friends-and-family network (as encouraged in many of the Leadership Journeys), is a chance for you to get to know the families of the girls in your group. Before the meeting, be sure you and/or your co-volunteers have done the following:

- For younger girls, arranged for a parent, another volunteer, or a group of older girls to do activities with the girls in your group while you talk with their parents/guardians.
- Practice a discussion on the following: Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law; benefits of Girl Scouting for their daughters, including how the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a world-class system for developing girl leaders; all the fun the girls are going to have; expectations for girls and their parents/guardians; and ideas of how parents and other guardians can participate in and enrich their daughters’ Girl Scout experiences.
- Determine when product program (including Girl Scout cookie activities) will happen in our Council; parents/guardians will absolutely want to know!
- Determine what information parents should bring to the meeting.
- Used the Friends and Family pages provided in the adult guides for many of the Journeys, or created your own one-page information sheet. It should list contact information for you and co-volunteers and helpers, the day and time of each meeting, location of and directions to the meeting place, what to bring with them, and information on how to get a Journey’s resources (books, awards, and keepsakes) and other merchandise like sashes, vests and T-shirts.
- Gathered or created supplies, including a sign-in sheet, an information sheet, “Parent/Guardian Permission for Troop Outings” (available on the Council website) and GSUSA registration forms.
- Prepare yourself to ask parents and guardians for help, being as specific as you can about the kind of help you will need (the Journey’s Friends and Family pages will come in handy here)!

Registering Girls in Girl Scouting

Every participant (girl or adult) in Girl Scouting must register and become a member of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA). GSUSA membership dues are valid for one year from October 1st – September 30th. Membership dues (currently $25) are sent by the Council to GSUSA; no portion of the dues stays with the Council. Membership dues may not be transferred to another member and is not refundable.

Pre-registration for the upcoming membership year occurs in the spring. Girls are encouraged to register early to avoid the “fall” rush. Early registration helps ensure uninterrupted receipt of forms and materials from the Council, helps girls and our Councils plan ahead, and gets girls excited about all the great stuff they want to do as Girl Scouts next year. Girl Scout grade level is determined by the current membership year beginning October 1.

Lifetime membership is available at a reduced rate for graduating high school seniors. A lifetime member must be at least 18 years old (or a 17-year-old high-school graduate) and agree to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

You’re free to structure the parent/guardian meeting in whatever way works for you, but the following outline works for many new volunteers:

- As the girls and adults arrive, ask them to sign in. If the girls’ parents/guardians haven’t already registered them online, you’ll want to email or hand out information so they can do so.
• Open the meeting by welcoming the girls and adults. Introduce yourself and other co-volunteers or helpers. Have adults and girls introduce themselves, discuss whether anyone in their families has been a Girl Scout, and talk about what Girl Scouting means to them. Welcome everyone, regardless of experience, and let them know they will be learning about Girl Scouts today. If you’re new to Girl Scouting, don’t worry—just let everyone know you will be learning about Girl Scouting together!

• Ask the girls to go with the adult or teen in charge of their activity and begin the discussion.

• Discuss the information you prepared for this meeting:
  • All the fun girls are going to have!
  • When and where the group will meet and some examples of activities the girls might choose to do
  • That a parent/guardian permission form is used for activities outside the group’s normal meeting time and place and the importance of completing and returning it
  • How you plan to keep in touch with parents/guardians (a Facebook page or group, Twitter, e-mail, text messaging, a phone tree, or fliers the girls take home are just some ideas)
  • The Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law
  • The Girl Scout program, especially what the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is and what the program does for their daughters
  • When Girl Scout cookies (and other products) will go on sale and how participation in product program teaches life skills and helps fund group activities
  • The cost of membership, which includes annual GSUSA dues, optional uniforms, and any resources parents/guardians will need to buy (such as a girl’s book for a Journey)
  • The availability of financial assistance and how the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program generate funds for the troop/group treasury
  • That families can also make donations to the Council—and why they might want to do that!
  • That you are looking for additional volunteers, and in which areas you are looking. Be as specific as possible!

• Remind the group of the next meeting and thank everyone for attending. Hold the next parents meeting when it makes sense for you and your co-volunteers—that may be in two months if face-to-face meetings are best or not at all if you’re diligent about keeping in touch with parents/guardians via email, phone calls, or some other form of communication.

• After the meeting, follow up with any parents/guardians who did not attend, to connect them with the group, inform them of decisions, and discuss how they can best help the girls.
Creating an Atmosphere of Acceptance and Inclusion

Girl Scouts embraces girls of all abilities, backgrounds, and heritage, with a specific and positive philosophy of inclusion that benefits everyone. Each girl—without regard to socioeconomic status, race, physical or cognitive ability, ethnicity, primary language, or religion—is an equal and valued member of the group, and groups reflect the diversity of the community.

Inclusion is an approach and an attitude, rather than a set of guidelines. Inclusion is about belonging, about all girls being offered the same opportunities, about respect and dignity, and about honoring the uniqueness of and differences among us all. You’re accepting and inclusive when you:

- Welcome every girl and focus on building community.
- Emphasize cooperation instead of competition.
- Provide a safe and socially comfortable environment for girls.
- Teach respect for, understanding of, and dignity toward all girls and their families.
- Actively reach out to girls and families who are traditionally excluded or marginalized.
- Foster a sense of belonging to community as a respected and valued peer.
- Honor the intrinsic value of each person’s life.

A Variety of Formats for Publications

The Hispanic population is the largest-growing in the United States, which is why Girl Scouts has translated many of its publications into Spanish. Over time, Girl Scouts will continue to identify members’ needs and produce resources to support those needs, including translating publications into additional languages and formats.

As you think about where, when, and how often to meet with your group, you will find yourself considering the needs, resources, safety, and beliefs of all members and potential members. As you do this, include the special needs of any members who have disabilities, or whose parents or guardians have disabilities. But please don’t rely on visual cues to inform you of a disability: Approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population has a disability—that’s one in five people, of every socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and religion.

As a volunteer, your interactions with girls present an opportunity to improve the way society views girls (and their parents/guardians) with disabilities. Historically, disabilities have been looked at from a deficit viewpoint with a focus on how people with disabilities could be fixed. Today, the focus is on a person’s abilities—on what she can do rather than on what she cannot.

If you want to find out what a girl with a disability needs to make her Girl Scout experience successful, simply ask her or her parent/guardian. If you are frank and accessible, it’s likely they will respond in kind, creating an atmosphere that enriches everyone.

It’s important for all girls to be rewarded based on their best efforts—not on the completion of a task. Give any girl the opportunity to do her best and she will. Sometimes that means changing a few rules or approaching an activity in a more creative way. Here are some examples of ways to modify activities:

- Invite a girl to complete an activity after she has observed others doing it.
- If you are visiting a museum to view sculpture, find out if a girl who is blind might be given permission to touch the pieces.
• If an activity requires running, a girl who is unable to run could be asked to walk or do another physical movement.

In addition, note that people-first language puts the person before the disability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Say . . .</th>
<th>Instead of . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She has a learning disability.</td>
<td>She is learning disabled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has a developmental delay.</td>
<td>She is mentally retarded; she is slow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She uses a wheelchair.</td>
<td>She is wheelchair-bound.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When interacting with a girl (or parent/guardian) with a disability, consider these final tips:

• When talking to a girl with a disability, speak directly to her, not through a parent/guardian or friend.
• It’s okay to offer assistance to a girl with a disability, but wait until your offer is accepted before you begin to help. Listen closely to any instructions the person may have.
• Leaning on a girl’s wheelchair is invading her space and is considered annoying and rude.
• When speaking to a girl who is deaf and using an interpreter, speak to the girl, not to her interpreter.
• When speaking for more than a few minutes to a girl who uses a wheelchair, place yourself at eye level.
• When greeting a girl with a visual disability, always identify yourself and others. You might say, “Hi, it’s Sheryl. Tara is on my right, and Chris is on my left.”

Girls with cognitive disabilities can be registered as closely as possible to their chronological ages. They wear the uniform of that grade level. Make any adaptations for the girl to ongoing activities of the grade level to which the group belongs. Young women with cognitive disorders may choose to retain their girl membership through their 21st year, and then move into an adult membership category.
Chapter 4: Safety-Wise

(Revised April 2017)
In Girl Scouting, the emotional and physical safety and well-being of girls is always a top priority. Here’s what you need to know.

Knowing Your Responsibilities
You (the volunteer), the parents/guardians of the girls in your group, and the girls themselves share the responsibility for staying safe. The next three sections provide more details on everyone’s responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer

Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls, and we all demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these guidelines at all times.

1. Follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints.
   Instructions for staying safe while participating in activities are detailed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints, available from your council. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents and girls before engaging in activities with girls.

2. Points common to all Safety Activity Checkpoints include:
   - **Girls plan the activity.** Keeping their grade-level abilities in mind, encourage girls to take proactive leadership roles in organizing details of the activity.
   - **Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls.** Your group must have at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary (this is dependent upon the size of the group and the ages and abilities of girls). Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old (or the age of majority defined by your state, if it is older than 18), and must be screened by your council before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female.
   - **Get parent/guardian permission.** When an activity takes place that is outside the normal time and place, advise each parent/guardian of the details of the activity and obtain permission for girls to participate.
   - **Communicate with council and parents.** Follow council procedures for activity approval, certificates of insurance, and council guidelines about girls’ general health examinations. Make arrangements in advance for all transportation and confirm plans before departure.
   - **Be prepared for emergencies and compile key contacts.** Work with girls and other adults to establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/adults and site security. Give an itinerary to a contact person at home; call the contact person upon departure and return. Create a list of girls’ parents/guardian contact information, telephone numbers for emergency services and police, and council contacts—keep on hand or post in an easily accessible location. Always keep handy a well-stocked first-aid kit, girl health histories and contact information for girls’ families. Check Safety Activity Checkpoints to determine the type of first aider needed.
   - **Get a weather report.** On the morning of the activity, check weather.com or other reliable weather sources to determine if conditions are appropriate. If severe weather conditions prevent the activity, be prepared with a backup plan or alternate activity, and/or postpone the activity. Write, review, and practice evacuation and emergency plans for severe weather with girls. In the event of a storm, take shelter away from tall objects (including trees, buildings, and electrical poles). Find the lowest point in an open flat area. Squat low to the ground on the balls of the feet, and place hands on knees with head between them.
Use the buddy system. Using the buddy system, girls are divided into teams of two. Each girl is responsible for staying with her buddy at all times, warning her buddy of danger, giving her buddy immediate assistance if safe to do so, and seeking help when the situation warrants it. Girls are encouraged to stay near the group or buddy with another team of two, so in the event someone is injured, one person cares for the patient while two others seek help.

3. Report abuse. Sexual advances, improper touching and sexual activity of any kind with girl members, as well as physical, verbal and emotional abuse of girls is strictly forbidden. Follow your council’s guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting.

4. Travel safely. When transporting girls to planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities that are outside the normal time and place, every driver must be an approved adult volunteer, at least 21 years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears her seat belt at all times, and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

5. Ensure safe overnight outings. Prepare girls to be away from home by involving them in planning, so they know what to expect. Avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. During family or parent-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the same sleeping quarters in program areas. When parents are staffing events, daughters should remain in quarters with other girls rather than in staff areas.

6. Role-model the right behavior. Never use illegal drugs. Don’t consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls, unless given special permission by your council for group marksmanship activities.

7. Create an emotionally safe space. Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior and discrimination.

8. Ensure that no girl is treated differently. Girl Scouts welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, planning and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

9. Promote online safety. Instruct girls never to put their full names or contact information online, engage in virtual conversation with strangers, or arrange in-person meetings with online contacts. On group websites, publish girls’ first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge and have them commit to it.

10. Keep girls safe during money-earning activities. Girl Scout cookies and other council-sponsored product sales are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or are not Girl Scout–approved product sales and efforts.

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CAUTION: When activities involve unpredictable safety variables, they are not recommended as Girl Scout program activities. These include but are not limited to:

- Bungee Jumping
- Flying in small private planes, helicopters or blimps
- Go-Carting
- Hang gliding
- Hot air ballooning
- Hunting
- Motor biking
- Parachuting
- Parasailing
- Riding all-terrain vehicles
- Riding motorized personal watercraft such as jet skis
- Skydiving
- Stunt skiing
- Trampolining
- Zorbing

**Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

You want to engage each parent or guardian to help you work toward ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of girls. Clearly communicate to parents and guardians that they are expected to:

- Provide permission for their daughters to participate in Girl Scouting as well as provide additional consent for activities that take place outside the scheduled meeting place, involve overnight travel, involve the use of special equipment, and/or cover sensitive issues.
- Make provisions for their daughters to get to and from meeting places or other designated sites in a safe and timely manner and inform you if someone other than the parent or guardian will drop off or pick up the child.
- Provide their daughters with appropriate clothing and equipment for activities, or contact you before the activity to find sources for the necessary clothing and equipment.
- Follow Girl Scout safety guidelines and encourage their children to do the same.
- Assist you in planning and carrying out program activities as safely as possible.
- Participate in parent/guardian meetings.
- Be aware of appropriate behavior expected of their daughters, as determined by the Council and you.
- Assist volunteers if their daughters have special needs or abilities and their help is solicited.

**Responsibilities of Girls**

Girls who learn about and practice safe and healthy behaviors are likely to establish lifelong habits of safety consciousness. For that reason, each Girl Scout is expected to:

- Assist you and other volunteers in safety planning.
- Listen to and follow your instructions and suggestions.
- Learn and practice safety skills.
- Learn to “think safety” at all times and to be prepared.
- Identify and evaluate an unsafe situation.
- Know how, when, and where to get help when needed.
Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need

Whatever the activity, from camping to cookies sales, adult supervision is required regardless of the grade level of the girls. The table below has been developed to show the minimum number of adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls (councils may also establish maximums due to size or cost restrictions). These adult-to-girl supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of all girls taking part in the activity. For example, if one adult has to respond to an emergency, a second adult is always on hand for the rest of the girls. It may take you a minute to get used to the layout of this chart, but once you start to use it, you’ll find the chart extremely helpful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Meetings</th>
<th>Events, Travel, and Camping*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for every:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female)</strong> for this number of girls:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One additional adult to each additional:</strong></td>
<td>Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for every:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Daisies (grades K–1)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some examples: If you’re meeting with 17 Daisies, you’ll need three unrelated adults, at least two of whom are unrelated (in other words, you and someone who is not your sister, spouse, parent, or child), and at least one of whom is female. (If this isn’t making sense to you, follow the chart: you need two adults for 12 Daisies and one more adult for up to six more girls. You have 17, so you need three adults.) If, however, you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting, you need only two unrelated adults, at least one of which is female (because, on the chart, two adults can manage up to 25 Cadettes).

In addition to the adult-to-girl ratios, please remember that adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old or at the age of majority defined by the state, if it is older than 18. *GSLE supports travel opportunities for girls and promotes their leadership development by allowing only the required minimum of adults per program age level.*

Girl Scouts Louisiana East requires that all adults working directly with girls should be registered members of the organization and be approved volunteers (successfully completed volunteer screening process). In other
words, troop leadership team members, product sales volunteers, drivers, first aiders, and adults that camp with the troop and frequently attend meetings or troop outings must be approved volunteers. Adult supervision for all girls also extends to any online activity. For additional information on online safety, please consult:

- The “Computer/Online Use” Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge
Transporting Girls

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent’s individual decision and responsibility.

For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities—outside the normal time and place—in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

- **Every driver must be an approved adult volunteer, at least 21 years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.** Girl Scouts Louisiana East requires that any adults working directly and frequently with girls should be registered members of Girl Scouts and completed the volunteer screening process.
- Girls never drive other girls.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios in *Volunteer Essentials* must be followed.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios in *Volunteer Essentials* must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car (with a single adult driver) is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

Private transportation includes private passenger vehicles, rental cars, privately owned or rented recreational vehicles and campers, chartered buses, chartered boats, and chartered flights. Each driver of motorized private transportation must be at least 21 years old and hold a valid operator’s license appropriate to the vehicle—state laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines here. Anyone who is driving a vehicle with **more than 15** passengers must also be a professional driver who possesses a commercial driver’s license (CDL)—check with your Council to determine specific rules about renting large vehicles.

Please keep in mind the following non-negotiable points regarding private transportation:

- Even though written agreements are always required when renting or chartering, you are not authorized to sign an agreement or contract—even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such an agreement must instead be signed by the person designated by your Council.
- Check with your Council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation; this ensures that both you and your Council are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident.
- *If your Council has given permission to use a rented car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms and avoid surprises. Note the minimum age of drivers (often 25), as well as the maximum age (often under 70). Be sure the car is adequately insured, knowing who is responsible for damage to or the loss of the vehicle itself. Also, ensure you have a good paper trail, with evidence that the vehicle rental is Girl Scout–related.*
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for any use of transportation outside of the meeting place.

*Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not permit the use of **15** passenger vans as they are not covered under the council insurance policy.*
Checklist for Drivers

When driving a car, RV, or camper, take the following precautions and ask any other drivers to do the same:

- Ensure all drivers are adults—girls should not be transporting other girls.
- Never transport girls in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup, or in a camper-trailer.
- Keep directions and a road map in the car, along with a first-aid kit and a flashlight.
- Check your lights, signals, tires, windshield wipers, horns, and fluid levels before each trip and check them periodically on long trips.
- Keep all necessary papers up to date, such as your driver’s license, vehicle registration, any state or local inspections, insurance coverage, and the like.
- Wear your seat belt at all times, and insist that all passengers do the same; keep girls under 12 in the back seats.
- Follow all the established rules of the road in your state following the speed limit, keeping a two-car-length between you and the car ahead of you, not talking or texting on a cell phone or other personal electronic device, not using earbuds or headphones, driving with your headlights on, and so on.
- Avoid driving for extended periods at night, when tired, or taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- Plan rest stops every few hours; if driving with others, prearrange stopping places along the way. When planning longer trips, arrange for relief drivers. Check with your Council for specific guidelines.
Approaching Activities

How can you, as a Girl Scout volunteer, determine whether an activity is safe and appropriate for Girl Scouts? Good judgment and common sense often dictate the answer. What’s safe in one circumstance may not be safe in another. An incoming storm, for example, might force you to assess or discontinue an activity. If you are uncertain about the safety of an activity, call your council staff with full details and don’t proceed without approval. Remember, the safety of girls is your most important consideration.

Prior to any activity, read the specific Safety Activity Checkpoints (available on your council’s website or from your support team in some other format) related to any activity you plan to do with girls. If Safety Activity Checkpoints do not exist for an activity you and the girls are interested in, check with your council before making any definite plans with the girls. A few activities are allowed only with written council pre-approval and only for girls 12 and over, while some are off-limits completely:

**CAUTION:** You must get written pre-approval from your council for girls ages 12 and older who will:
- Use firearms for target shooting (see Sport Shooting Safety Activity Checkpoints)
- Take trips on waterways that are highly changeable or uncontrollable (See Whitewater Rafting Safety Activity Checkpoints)

**WARNING:** When activities involve unpredictable safety variables, they are not recommended as Girl Scout program activities. These include but are not limited to:
- Bungee Jumping
- Flying in small private planes, helicopters or blimps
- Go-Carting
- Hang gliding
- Hot air ballooning
- Hunting
- Motor biking
- Parachuting
- Parasailing
- Riding all-terrain vehicles
- Riding motorized personal watercraft such as jet skis
- Skydiving
- Stunt skiing
- Trampolining
- Zorbing

When planning activities with girls, note the abilities of each girl and carefully consider the progression of skills from the easiest part to the most difficult. Make sure the complexity of the activity does not exceed girls’ individual skills. Bear in mind that skill levels decline when people are tired, hungry or under stress. Also use activities as opportunities for building teamwork, which is one of the outcomes for the Connect key in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE).

**Health Histories (Including Examinations and Immunizations)**

Each girl (and adult chaperoning trips) should have an updated health history form completed and maintained by the troop/group leader or co-leader, camp health supervisor or if required the program event coordinator.
Either way, keep in mind that information from a health examination is confidential and may be shared only with people who must know this information such as the girl herself, her parent/guardian, and a health practitioner. Health histories should be available any time the girls/troop/group is gathered (including trips).

For various reasons, some parents/guardians may object to immunizations or medical examinations. Our Council will attempt to make provisions for these girls to attend Girl Scout functions in a way that accommodates these concerns.

It is important for you to also be aware of any medications a girl may take or allergies she may have.

- Medication, including over-the-counter products, must never be dispensed without prior written permission from a girl’s custodial parent or guardian. A “Medication Administration Permission Form” available on the Council website. Some girls may need to carry and administer their own medications, such as bronchial inhalers, an EpiPen, or diabetes medication.
- Common food allergies include dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, and seafood. This means, before serving any food (such as peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, cookies, or chips), ask whether anyone is allergic to peanuts, dairy products, or wheat! Even Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies should be aware of their allergies, but double-checking with their parents/guardians is always a good idea.

**Girl Scout Activity Insurance**

Every registered Girl Scout and registered adult member in the Girl Scout movement is automatically covered under the basic plan is effective during the regular fiscal year (October to the following October). Up to 14 months of insurance coverage is provided for new members who register in the month of August. This insurance provides up to a specified maximum for medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while a member is participating in an approved, supervised Girl Scout activity, after the individual's primary insurance pays out. This is one reason that all adults and girls should be registered members. Non-registered parents, tagalongs (brothers, sisters, friends), and other persons are not covered by basic coverage.

This insurance coverage is not intended to diminish the need for or replace family health insurance. When $130 in benefits has been paid for covered accident, medical or dental expense, any subsequent benefits will be payable only for expenses incurred that aren’t compensable under another insurance policy. If there is no family insurance or healthcare program, a specified maximum of medical benefits is available.

An optional plan of activity insurance is available for Girl Scouts taking extended trips and for non-members who participate in Girl Scout activities. These plans are secondary insurance that the Council will assist you in purchasing to cover participants taking part in any Council-approved, supervised Girl Scout activity. Additional insurance coverage is available and required for any Girl Scout activity that involves non-Girl Scouts or lasts longer than three days and two nights.

All requests for optional insurance coverage must be submitted to your Troop Support Specialist with applicable premiums, six to eight weeks, and prior to commencement of activity/trip/event. Requests submitted on shorter notice and/or without premiums cannot be guaranteed to be processed in time for activity/trip/event. Late submissions may mean the activity/trip/event will have to be rescheduled. Please submit forms and premiums to your Troop Support Specialist.

Review the Girl Scouts insurance plan description by going to www.mutualofomaha.com/girl_scouts_of_the_usa/index.html.

**Experts**
The Safety Activity Checkpoints for most activities require having an expert on hand to help girls learn an activity. Please remember that **all experts must be approved by your Council.** To make it a bit easier, many Councils keep lists of local experts (such as sailing instructors) and facilities (such as roller skating rinks) they've already approved. If your Council doesn’t keep these lists, you’ll have to present an expert for the Council’s consideration. Some things to keep in mind:

- **Does the person have documented training and experience?** She or he should have documented experience for the activity in question, such as course completion certificates or cards, records of previous training to instruct the activity, and letters of reference.

- **What does she or he need to be able to do?** This person should have the knowledge and experience to make appropriate judgments concerning participants, equipment, facilities, safety considerations, supervision, and procedures for the activity. At the very least, he or she should be able to give clear instructions to girls and adults, troubleshoot unexpected scenarios, and respond appropriately in an emergency.
Providing Emergency Care

As you know, emergencies can happen. Girls need to receive proper instruction in how to care for themselves and others in emergencies. They also need to learn the importance of reporting to adults any accidents, illnesses, or unusual behaviors during Girl Scout activities. To this end, you can help girls:

- **Know what to report.** See the “Procedures for Accidents” section later in this chapter.
- **Establish and practice procedures for weather emergencies.** Certain extreme-weather conditions may occur in your area. Please consult with the Council for the most relevant information for you to share with girls.
- **Establish and practice procedures for such circumstances as fire evacuation, lost persons, and building-security responses.** Every girl and adult must know how to act in these situations. For example, you and the girls, with the help of a fire department representative, should design a fire evacuation plan for meeting places used by the group.
- **Assemble a well-stocked first-aid kit that is always accessible.** First-aid administered in the first few minutes can mean the difference between life and death. In an emergency, secure professional medical assistance as soon as possible, normally by calling 911.

**First-Aid/CPR**

Emergencies require prompt action and quick judgment. For many activities, Girl Scouts requires that at least one adult volunteer be first-aid/CPR-certified. For that reason, if you have the opportunity to get trained in Council-approved first-aid/CPR, do it! You can take advantage of first-aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America or other sponsoring organizations approved by the council. Try to take age-specific CPR training—that is, take child CPR if you’re working with younger girls and adult CPR when working with older girls and adults.

**Caution:** First-aid/CPR training available entirely online does not satisfy Girl Scouts’ requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique. If you’re taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or any course that has online components, get approval from the Adult Development Department.

**First-Aider**

A first-aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout-approved first-aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR. If, through the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, or American Heart Association, you have a chance to be fully trained in first-aid and CPR, doing so may make your activity-planning go a little more smoothly. The Safety Activity Checkpoints always tell you when a first-aider needs to be present.

Activities can take place in a variety of locations, which is why first-aid requirements are based on the remoteness of the activity—as noted in the Safety Activity Checkpoints for that activity. For example, it’s possible to do a two-mile hike that has cell phone reception and service along the entire route and EMS (Emergency Medical System) is, at maximum, 15 minutes away at all times. It is also possible to hike more remotely with no cell phone service at a place where EMS would take more than 15 minutes to arrive. It’s important that you or another volunteer with your group has the necessary medical experience (including knowledge of evacuation techniques) to ensure group safety.
The levels of first aid required for any activity take into account both how much danger is involved and how remote the area is from emergency medical services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to EMS</th>
<th>Minimum Level of First Aid Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 minutes</td>
<td>First Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 30 minutes</td>
<td>Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Although a WFR is not required, it is strongly recommended when traveling with groups in areas that are greater than 30 minutes from EMS.

It is important to understand the differences between a first-aid course, and a wilderness-rated course. Although standard first-aid training provides basic incident response, wilderness-rated courses include training on remote-assessment skills, as well as the emergency first-aid response, including evacuation techniques, to use when EMS is not readily available.

**Note:** The presence of a first-aider is required at resident camp. For large events-200 people or more—there should be one first-aider for every 200 participants. The following healthcare providers may also serve as first-aiders: physician, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, paramedic, military medic, and emergency medical technician.

**First-Aid Kit**

Make sure a general first-aid kit is available at your group meeting place and accompanies girls on any activity (including transportation to and from the activity). Please be aware that you may need to provide this kit if one is not available at your meeting place. You can purchase a commercial kit, or you and the girls can assemble a kit yourselves. The Red Cross offers a list of potential items in its *Anatomy of a First Aid Kit.* Note that the Red Cross’s suggested list includes aspirin, which you will not be at liberty to give to girls without direct parent/guardian permission. You can also customize a kit to cover your specific needs, including flares, treatments for frostbite or snake bites.

In addition to standard materials, all kits should contain our Council and emergency telephone numbers which you can get from our Council’s crisis communication procedures. Girl Scout activity insurance forms, parent consent forms, and health histories may be included, as well.

**Procedures for Accidents**

Although you hope the worst never happens, you must observe Council procedures for handling accidents and fatalities. At the scene of an accident, first provide all possible care for the sick or injured person. Follow established Council procedures (see Crisis Communication Procedures – Girl Scouts Louisiana East below) for obtaining medical assistance and immediately reporting the emergency. To do this, you must always have on hand the names and telephone numbers of Council staff, parents/guardians, and emergency services such as the police, fire department, or hospital emergency technicians.

**Crisis Communication Procedures-Girl Scouts Louisiana East**

Despite the best efforts of all concerned, any organization may face a crisis situation. Consequently, all staff and volunteers of Girl Scouts Louisiana East are asked to observe the following guidelines should a crisis ever occur in our Council.
A crisis might involve a serious accident or injury of a child during a Girl Scout event or reports of product tampering during our annual product programs. At this time, the spokesperson has the initial responsibility of assessing the situation, determining the severity and the extent of contacts to be made initially.

In a crisis, all media inquiries will be handled **ONLY** by a designated spokesperson. The designated spokespersons for the Council are the Council’s Chief Executive Officer, Board Chair, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and other designated staff members. If the event, any board member, employed staff member, or volunteer becomes aware of a crisis situation involving Girl Scouts, a call should be made immediately to the **Council Headquarters at 1-800-644-7571** during business hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon. through Fri. or to the Council’s **Crisis Hotline Number, toll-free 1-866-388-0829 or 504-457-2780**, if after hours, weekends, holidays. The crisis hotline phone attendant has the ability to alert a crisis team member for an immediate call back to you.

Guidelines for Volunteers Directly Involved in a Crisis:

1. Give priority attention to providing all possible care for the injured.
2. Obtain doctor, ambulance, police, and clergy assistance as appropriate.
3. Call the appropriate phone number on the “Emergency Plan for Girl Scout Groups” wallet card to report the emergency and secure additional assistance.
4. Report to the spokesperson facts of incident (how many people were involved, who was sent to which hospital, etc.)
5. In the event of a fatality or other serious accident, **always** notify police first. Retain a responsible person at the scene. See that no disturbance of the victim or surroundings is permitted until police have assumed authority.
6. Make NO STATEMENTS to the media (press, radio, TV). Refer all media inquiries to the appropriate phone number listed on the “Emergency Plan for Girl Scout Groups” wallet card.
7. Remain calm. Do not speak "off the record," lose your temper, reveal proprietary information, or place or accept blame.
8. Complete and submit incident/accident report to your Troop Support Specialist or staff mentor within 48 hours.

Guidelines for Volunteers NOT Directly Involved in a Crisis:

1. It is very important that only a few representatives speak for the Council at a time of crisis. The only authorized Council spokespersons are the Council’s Chief Executive Officer, Board Chair, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and other designated staff members. Be sure to make NO STATEMENTS whatsoever regarding the situation. A personal opinion can be quoted as coming from "a member of the organization."
2. Be courteous to any member of the media that may contact you but refer them to the appropriate spokesperson. Inaccurate information or an expression of anger can destroy years of goodwill-building by the Council.

**Child Passenger Restraint**

Louisiana Revised Statute 32:295 (Child Restraint Law) requires that children under the age of six years of age be in a specific type of child restraint. The law states that **every driver in this state who transports a child or children under the age of 13 years in a motor vehicle which is equipped with safety belts shall have the child properly secured as follows:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age or weight requirements</th>
<th>Type of restraint</th>
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</table>
If a child less than 1 year of age or weighs less than 20 lbs.  
Rear-facing safety seat

If a child is between 1 and 3 years of age, or weighs between 20 to 39 lbs.  
Forward-facing child safety seat.

If a child is between 4 and 5 years of age, or weighs between 40 to 60 lbs.  
Child booster seat. These requirements shall not apply in any seating position where there is only a lap belt available and the child weighs more than 40 pounds.

If a child is 6 years of age or older, or weighs 60 lbs. or more.  
The motor vehicle’s safety belt adjusted and fastened around the child’s body or in an appropriately fitting child booster seat in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer of the safety belt or the child booster seat.

A child who because of age or weight can be placed in more than one category shall be placed in the more protective category.

You Witness or Experience Abuse

Sexual advances, improper touching, and sexual activity of any kind with girl members are forbidden. Physical, verbal and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. All states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have statues identifying persons who are required to report suspected child abuse to an appropriate agency. Therefore, if you witness or suspect child abuse or neglect, whether inside or outside of Girl Scouting, follow your council’s guidelines for reporting your concerns to the proper agency within your state.

For additional information please check the following resources:
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Child Welfare Information Gateway:  
  https://www.childwelfare.gov/can/
- How to Report Suspected Child Maltreatment:  
  https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/how/
- Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect:  
  https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm

Child Abuse Reporting Procedures

Situations may arise that will require your immediate attention. Child abuse is a crime that must be reported immediately. You need only to suspect abuse to make a report. First, call the state Child Protection Agency at the number listed below. Then complete an “Incident/Accident Report” and submit it to your Troop Support Specialist or the nearest Council office. This form is used for Girl Scout Council records only.

Every Mandatory Reporter has to follow up each Oral Report (the call to either law enforcement or OCS) with a Written Report to the OCS office within five days of the initial Oral Report. Children’s Code Article 610D.
Responding to the Child:
• Do not panic or express shock, but treat what the girl has said as fact.
• Use child's vocabulary (do not interpret with adult language).
• Assure her it is not her fault and that it is important that she told someone about it.
• Be sympathetic and nonjudgmental.
• Respect the privacy of the child, but don't promise “not to tell. “Don’t promise that “you will fix it or everything will be ok.”
• The child will need to tell her story in detail to investigators, so don't press her for details.

Reporting to Authorities:
AN ORAL REPORT SHOULD BE MADE IMMEDIATELY (see listing below). Volunteers and Council staff are considered mandated reporters. Reporters are not required to identify themselves when providing information on suspected child abuse and/or neglect. However, the Child Protection Agency holds the name of the reporter in strictest confidence. The reporter's name may be helpful for follow-up. Give all information on the child that you know, such as:
• Name, age and address of the child
• Parents or person responsible for child's care
• Nature and extent of abuse
• Explanation given by caretakers (if given)
• Perpetrator's identity (if known)
• Any additional information that may be helpful

Louisiana Children’s Code, Title VI, Child in Need of Care:
CHC 601. The purpose of this title is to protect children whose physical or mental health and welfare is substantially at risk of harm by physical abuse, neglect, or exploitation and who may be further threatened by the conduct of others, by providing for the reporting of suspected cases of abuse, exploitation, or neglect of children; by providing for the investigation of such complaints, and by providing, if necessary for the resolution of child in need of care proceedings in the courts.
CHC 611. Any person who in good faith makes a report, cooperates in any investigation arising as a result of such report, or participates in judicial proceedings authorized under the provisions of this Chapter, or any caseworker shall have immunity from civil or criminal liability that otherwise might be incurred or imposed.

Office of Community Services
- 24 Hour Child Protection Hotlines -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Baton Rouge</td>
<td>(225) 925-4571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafourche</td>
<td>(866-461-6278)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson (East Bank)</td>
<td>(504) 736-7033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson (West Bank)</td>
<td>(504) 361-6083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orleans</td>
<td>(504) 680-9000 or (504) 680-9001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>(800-844-6508)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Terrebonne (985) 857-3634
(24 hour, weekend, holiday only)
St. Tammany (985) 893-6225
Tangipahoa (985) 748-2001
Livingston (225) 686-7257
St. Helena (985) 748-2001
Washington (985) 732-6800

State of Louisiana
Department of Children and Family Services
dss.state.la.us/index.cfm

Call 855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
Chapter 5: Managing Group Finances

Helping girls decide what they want to do, and coaching them as they earn and manage money to pursue their goals is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). Your Girl Scout group plans and finances its own activities, with your guidance. At the same time, the girls learn many valuable skills that serve them throughout their lives.

Girl Scout groups are funded by a share of money earned through Council-sponsored product program activities (such as Girl Scout Cookie activities), group money-earning activities with Council approval and any dues your group may charge. (This is in addition to the $25 annual membership dues that go to the national organization.) This chapter gives you the ins and outs of establishing a group account and helping girls manage their group’s finances, practice successful product sales techniques, review the safety requirements around product programs, and understand how to collaborate with sponsors and causes.

For information and guidance on safety related to product sales see Chapter 4, Safety-Wise.

The Adult Role in Troop/Group Money Management

Leader/Adult Volunteer guidance is fundamental in successful troop/group money management. They are responsible for ensuring that the troop/group operates within GSUSA and Girl Scouts Louisiana East program policies and procedures.

Briefly, the troop leader(s)/adult volunteer has responsibility for:

- Reading and following GSUSA & Girl Scouts Louisiana East policies and procedures on money.
- Helping girls understand planning, budgeting and troop/group finances.
- Keeping parents advised of troop/group plans and troop/group finances.
- Requesting financial assistance from the Council for individual girls who cannot afford the $15 registration fee. Dues assistance will only be provided one time.
- Opening and maintaining a troop/group checking account.
- Keeping accurate records of income and expenditures.
- Submitting “Troop/Group Budget/Finance Report” to the Community Administrator/Community Team Organizer as instructed.

The troop/group leader is encouraged to designate an adult to serve as the troop/group money manager to assist with budgeting, record keeping and the preparation of financial reports.

Establishing an Account

If your troop/group is earning and spending money, the troop/group needs to set up a bank account. If you’re taking over an existing troop/group, you may inherit a checking account, but with a new troop/group, you’ll want to open a new account. This usually happens when there is money to deposit, such as troop/group dues or money from product sales or troop/group money-earning activities. Consider these tips when working with a troop/group account:

- Keep group funds in the bank before an activity or trip, paying for as many items as possible in advance of your departure.
- Use debit cards during the activity or trip.
- Make one person responsible for troop/group funds and for keeping a daily account of expenditures.
- Handle a lost group debit card the same way you would a personal debit card: cancel it immediately.
Girl Scout troops/groups at every level should keep their funds in a bank account opened in the name of “Girl Scouts Louisiana East Troop #_____ or Girl Scouts Louisiana East Group #_____.“ To ensure that funds held in the account are tax exempt, troops/groups should use Girl Scouts Louisiana East Federal Tax Identification number listed on the “Request for Authorization to Open or Change a Bank Account Form” when opening the account (available on Council website). Volunteers should never open a Girl Scout account using a personal Social Security number. Each account should have at least two authorized signatories, ideally three, to assure access to the account in case of emergency. Debit cards, only one card per account, are permitted for Girl Scouts Louisiana East troops/groups. Please note some banks do not provide debit cards for troop accounts.

To open a bank account, submit a complete the “Request for Authorization to Open or Change Bank Account” form to your Troop Support Specialist. A properly executed authorization form will be forwarded to you granting permission for the account to be opened. Accounts should never be opened without the authorization letter from Girl Scouts Louisiana East. Please allow at least five working days for preparation of the bank form. The bank form will be e-mailed or mailed to the adult volunteer/leader giving authorization to open the account. The troop/group leader will then take the Council prepared bank authorization form to the bank the troop/group chooses and open the account.

Once the account is opened, the leader/adult volunteer has 10 days to complete and submit the “Troop Bank Account Verification & ACH Authorization” form with an attached voided check to your Troop Support Specialist. This document is then placed in the troop/group file. Troops/groups are required to submit bank statements on a quarterly basis and/or per request by Council.

Troops/groups should request checks for their account printed as “Girl Scouts Louisiana East Troop #_____ or Girl Scouts Louisiana East Group #_____.“ All troop/group funds should be promptly deposited in their checking account. Whenever possible, purchases, all registration, fall product and cookie payments should be made with troop/group checks rather than with cash or personal checks. Receipts should be kept for all troop/group purchases.

**Managing Your Account**

The Troop/Group Money Manager is responsible for coordinating deposits, expenditures and financial reporting for and to the troop/group. Since the money belongs to the “troop/group,” it is important that the management of funds is transparent for the girls, parents and volunteers, as well as the Council.

Purchasing supplies and requesting reimbursements correctly for troop/group/community is an essential part of managing your bank account. Follow these guidelines to keep the process easy:

**Purchases/expenses**

Whenever possible, purchase supplies, equipment, goods and services with the troop/group check or debit card. It is also important to only use the troop/group bank account for appropriate expenses. If a troop/group leader or troop money manager has a question about appropriate purchases, the Community Administrator should be contacted.

See below for a partial list.

- Supplies, equipment which become property of the troop/group when purchased by the troop/group and must be included in the Troop Inventory, goods and services purchased for troop/group
- Troop/group events and field trips
- Donations to the Annual Family Giving or Juliette Low World Friendship fund
- First aid training for an adult
- Leader books and materials; i.e. Journey adult guide and girl book, *The Girl Guide to Girl Scouting* (become property of the troop/group when purchased by the troop/group and must be included in the Troop Inventory)
- Reregistration fees for all girls and adult leaders/volunteers
- Babysitting for troop leader to attend training or meeting times – this needs to be cleared at a Parents Meeting and all parents must be aware of the situation and need.
- Recognitions for girls and Adults (i.e. – gift for Cookie Mom, Troop Money Manager, etc.)

**Reimbursements**

If a volunteer or parent requires reimbursement, requests will be submitted to the troop/group within 2 weeks of purchase and must be accompanied by a receipt. (If an invoice has not been received the 2 week rule may be waived.)

Reimbursements should be made by check with the reason for reimbursement noted on the check memo.

If a signer on the account or a member of his or her family is receiving reimbursement, one of the alternate signers must review the receipts and sign the check.

**Cash**

An ATM withdrawal receipt does not qualify as a receipt for reimbursement or justification for troop/group purchases. Troop Checks may not be made out to cash. All purchases made with cash or debit card require detailed receipts of the transaction(s).

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**Closing a Bank Account**

Unused Girl Scout money left in accounts when groups disband becomes the property of the Council. As when closing a personal account, be sure all checks and other debits have cleared the account before you close it, and realize that you may have to close the account in person. Contact your Troop Support Specialist to return balance of funds and all financial paperwork (including checks, debit card, check register and bank statements).
Understanding the Girl Scout Cookie Program

Did you know that the Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led business in the country, with sales of more than $700 million per year for girls and their communities nationwide?

That’s right. The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the leading entrepreneurial program for girls: No university has produced as many female business owners as the Girl Scout Cookie Program has.

If you have a moment, watch the latest Girl Scout What Can a Cookie Do? Video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Wy31SsNPv4 for an inspiring look into just how powerful those treats—and the girls who sell them—can be.

Council sponsored product sales are really the best way for girls to earn money to pursue their goals; the sales are beloved by the community and come with program, sales, and marketing materials and support that help girls run a great business. And they’re an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. With every season of cookies, another generation of girls learns five important skills:

- Goal setting
- Decision making
- Money management
- People skills
- Business ethics

And most of all, girls gain a tremendous amount of confidence. It’s not easy to ask people to buy something—you have to speak up, look them in the eye, and believe in what you’re doing—all skills that help a girl succeed now and throughout the rest of her life.

A Sweet Tradition

It has been more than 90 years since Girl Scouts began selling home-baked cookies to raise money. The idea was so popular that in 1936 Girl Scouts enlisted bakers to handle the growing demand.

Two commercial bakers are currently licensed by Girl Scouts of the USA to produce Girl Scout Cookies—Little Brownie Bakers and ABC/Interbake Foods—and each Council selects the baker of its choice. Each baker gets to name its own cookies (which is why some cookies have two names) and gets to decide which flavors it will offer in a given year, besides the three mandatory flavors (Thin Mints, Do-Si-Dos®/Peanut Butter Sandwich, and Trefoils/Shortbread). For additional information on cookie varieties, including nutritional details, visit www.girlscoutcookies.org.

Your Council’s Role

Each year, your Council provides learning opportunities on the procedures to follow during each program. Your Council also establishes guidelines and procedures for conducting the program and determines how the proceeds and recognition system will be managed.

Knowing Where Proceeds Go
Your council will provide a breakdown of “how the cookie crumbles” in your council. Please share this information with girls and their parents/guardians so everyone’s clear on how revenue raised through product sales makes it possible for your Girl Scout council to serve girls. Proceeds resulting from product sales support program activities—in fact, council-sponsored product sales are a primary way in which your council raises funds to support Girl Scouting. The percentage of money to be allocated to participating groups (like yours) is determined by your council and explained to girls and adults as part of the product sale activity orientation.

The income from product sales does not become the property of individual girl members. Girls, however, may be eligible for incentives and credits that they put toward Council sponsored camps, programs and programmatic materials.

Girls may earn official Girl Scout grade-appropriate rewards related to product sale activities, and each council may choose to provide items such as participation patches, rewards, and council credit for event fees, camp fees, grants for travel and Take Action projects, as well as materials and supplies for program activities. The council plan for rewards applies equally to all girls participating in the product sale activity.

The council's volunteer, you’re in charge of making sure money is spent wisely, excellent records are kept (keeping copies of all receipts in a binder or folder), and all income is tracked, too. For older girls, your job is to oversee their work, as they learn to keep impeccable records.

**Product Sales Program Safety**

Girl Scout council-sponsored product sales, which include magazines and nuts, as well as cookies, give girls proven opportunities to earn money and/or credits for their Girl Scout program activities. These sales also contribute significantly to the girls’ local councils and communities through take-action projects. In order to ensure the emotional and physical safety and well-being of girls, which is always a top priority in any activity, you need to read and understand the following guidelines.

**Prepare Early**

**Communicate with Parents**

Ensure that the parents/guardians of all girls participating in product sales are fully informed about the activity including the:

- Safety precautions in place
- Need for appropriate clothing and/or supplies
- Need for advance arrangements for all transportation and confirmation of these plans
- Need for written permission from them in order for their daughter to participate
- Location of designated sale areas, which are also communicated to the Council

**Communicate with Your Local Police Department**

Establish a relationship with your local Police Department to determine any support they may be able to provide during product sales, especially those related to cookie booths, and any safety precautions they might suggest. While Police Departments vary from state to state and city to city, many of them have resources such as:

- School Resource Officers who have specific training for communicating with young people
- Community Volunteers who may be able to assist by being present during booth sales

Police departments can also provide information on areas and addresses to avoid, as well as access to known sex offender registries.

**Prepare for Emergencies**
Regardless of the type of activity, you need to be prepared for emergencies involving girls or other adults. This should include having a first aid kit always available and making sure that if someone is injured and needs help, that one adult cares for the injured person while another adult seeks help.

**Arrange for Adult Supervision**

Adults provide supervision and guidance for all grade levels, and must accompany Girl Scout Daisies, Brownies, and Juniors when they are selling, taking orders for or delivering products. Adults must be present at booth activities, regardless of the age of the girls (see also the section “Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need”).

Adults who oversee Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors must:
- Be aware of how, when and where the girls are selling products
- Be on call when girls are participating in product sales
- Be readily available to them should they need assistance.
- Help girls understand how to be safe in their surroundings, and always enforce the use of the buddy system

Adult supervision for all Girl Scouts extends to any online activity. Consult the “Computer/Online Use” Safety Activity Checkpoints for specific information about safe online practices for all activities, and to obtain a copy of the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge.

**Plan for Safeguarding Money**

Girls should always have a plan for safeguarding money, which includes such things as:
- Not walking around with large amounts of money
- Keeping the cash box against a wall or behind a barrier of cookie boxes
- Not keeping money at home or school
- Giving cookie money to supervising adults, who will deposit the money as soon as possible

**Use the Buddy System**

Using the buddy system, girls are divided into teams of two. Each girl is responsible for staying with her buddy at all times, warning her buddy of danger, giving her buddy immediate assistance if safe to do so, and seeking help when the situation warrants it. Girls are encouraged to stay near the group or buddy with another team of two, so in the event someone is injured, one person cares for the patient while two others seek help.

**Be Streetwise and Follow Your Instincts**

In order to ensure the safety of girls while selling door-to-door, you and the girls should become familiar with the areas and neighborhoods in which girls would like to sell. In addition, girls should:
- Participate in door-to-door sales only during daylight hours
- Wear a membership pin, uniform, or Girl Scout clothing (e.g., Girl Scout T-shirt) to clearly identify themselves as Girl Scouts.

**Cookie Donation Programs**

Your council may have a cookie donation program established where customers may purchase cookies for the sole purpose of having them donated to an organization coordinated by your council. This is a great talking point for girls to share with their customers and a great way to help teach girls that the cookie program can make a big impact in their community and to others.

Here are some things to remember about cookie donations:
All cookie donation programs must be approved by your council
Donated cookies must stay within the council jurisdiction unless your council has the approval from other council jurisdictions
Donated products cannot be resold and must be used in a responsible and ethical way.
Donated products are used in a way that does not undermine the work of councils or jeopardizes the integrity of the Girl Scout Brand

Handling Product Complaints
It has always been the practice of Girl Scout councils and the bakers to guarantee customer satisfaction with their cookies. If a customer for some reason is not satisfied with the quality of their cookies they can contact the baker via the number printed on the side of the box of cookies.

Troops/group should notify their council if they are aware of any customer dissatisfaction

Using Online Resources and Social Media to Market Cookies and Other Products
Girls may use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, text messages, IMs, and emails as online marketing tools to let family, friends, and former customers know about the sale and collect indications of interest. All are effective ways that girls 13 and older can promote cookie and other product sales. Girls under 13 cannot independently set up online marketing sites. Girls under 13 can use their parent or guardians online sites with their approval and supervision.

The following sections detail how girls can use electronic marketing, social media, and group websites to gather sale commitments from family, friends, and previous customers. But first, please keep in mind that girls:

- Can market to and collect indications of interest from customers within their councils’ zip codes. Refer prospects that come from outside council jurisdiction to the council finder at www.girlscoutcookies.org. Family members and Digital Cookie sales are the exception to this rule.
- Must sign the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge (available at http://www.girlscouts.org/help/internet_safety_pledge.asp) before doing any online activities, and all online activities must be under the supervision of adults.
- Cannot expose their own or any other girl’s email address, physical address, or phone number to the public. When writing e-mail messages or online announcements, girls should sign with their first name only, along with their group number or name and their council name.

See Chapter 4, Safety-Wise for additional information and guidance regarding online product marketing and sales.

Setting Up a Troop/Group Website
Troops whose girls meet age criteria (13 years or older) and have parental permission may set up a group Facebook page or website. This site must be approved by the Girl Scouts Louisiana East Communications Department, but it can be a fantastic way for girls to share information, market Girl Scout products, and talk about their Take-Action projects.

Before you and the girls design a web site, remember that the web is an open forum for anyone, including potential predators. Documented instances of cyber stalkers make it imperative that any information that could jeopardize the safety and security of girls and adults is not disclosed on a website. Please adhere to these guidelines to ensure the girls’ safety:

- Use girls’ first names only.
• Never post girls’ addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses.
• **Do not post addresses of group meeting places or dates and times of meetings, events, or trips.** (An adult volunteer who wishes to communicate upcoming events with families of girls should use email instead of posting details on a web site, unless that site is password protected or is a closed/secret Facebook group.)
• Always have a parent’s or guardian’s signature on a photo release form before using pictures of girls on a web site. “Photo Release” forms are available on the Council website www.gsle.org/en/for-volunteers/online-support-for-volunteers/forms.html.
• Make yours a site that does not allow outsiders to post messages to the site, or make sure all postings (such as message boards or guest books) have adult oversight and are screened prior to posting live.

Don’t violate copyright law by using designs, text from magazines or books, poetry, music, lyrics, videos, graphics, or trademarked symbols without specific permission from the copyright or trademark holder and, generally, this permission is pretty tough to get!. Girl Scout trademarks such as the trefoil shape, Girl Scout pins, and badges and patches) can be used only in accordance with guidelines for their use. The Girl Scout trefoil, for example, may not be animated or used as wallpaper for a web site. Check with Girl Scouts Louisiana East Communications Department for complete graphic guidelines.

It is important to remember the twofold purpose of the Girl Scout Cookie Program when selling cookies or other products. The primary purposes of these sales are to help girls grow and develop and to generate the revenue necessary to provide Girl Scouting to as many girls as possible. For this reason, girls should be directly involved in any sales that are made, whether in person or over the Internet.

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**Daisies: Stay Especially Safe!**

Girl Scout Daisies are too young to be marketing online through their group, parent or guardian websites, or social media sites. For this reason, Girl Scout Daisies are allowed to send out emails only when working directly with an adult. Daisies and their adult volunteers must use only blind emails or the online marketing tools provided by GSUSA product vendors on their websites.
Additional Group Money Earning Activities

Groups earn money for their troop in two distinct ways:

- **The Girl Scout Cookie Program and other sales** of Girl Scout–authorized products (such as Girl Scout cookies, calendars, magazines, or nuts and candy), organized by your council and open to all Girl Scouts. Girls can participate in two council-sponsored product sale activities each year: one of which may be the cookie sale and one other council-authorized product sale. All girl members who take part in any way of Girl Scouting (troop, camp, travel, etc.), including Daisies, are eligible to participate in council-sponsored product-sale activities, with volunteer supervision. Please remember: volunteers and Girl Scout council staff don’t sell cookies and other products—girls do.

- “**Group money-earning**” refers to activities organized by the group (not by the council) that are planned and carried out by girls (in partnership with adults) and that earn money for the group.

Girls’ participation in both council-sponsored product sale activities and group money-earning projects is based upon the following:

- Voluntary participation
- Written permission of each girl’s parent or guardian
- An understanding of (and ability to explain clearly to others) why the money is needed
- An understanding that money-earning should not exceed what the group needs to support its activities
- Observance of local ordinances related to involvement of children in money-earning activities, as well as health and safety laws
- Vigilance in protecting the personal safety of each girl (see Chapter 4 for guidance)
- Arrangements for safeguarding the money.

There are a few specific guidelines—some required by the Internal Revenue Service—that ensure that sales are conducted with legal and financial integrity. To that end, consider the following reminders and cautions:

- All rewards earned by girls through the product-sale activities must support Girl Scout program experiences (such as camp, travel, and program events, but not scholarships or financial credits toward outside organizations).
- Rewards are based on sales ranges set by councils and may not be based on a dollar-per-dollar calculation.
- Troops and Groups are encouraged to participate in council product sales as their primary money-earning activity; any group money-earning shouldn’t compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program or other council product sales.
- Obtain written approval from your council before a group money-earning event; most councils ask that you submit a request for approval.
- Girl Scouts discourages the use of games of chance. Any activity which could be considered a game of chance (raffles, contests, bingo) must be approved by the local Girl Scout Council and be conducted in compliance with all local and state laws.
- Girl Scout Blue Book policy forbids girls from the direct solicitation of cash. Girls can collect partial payment towards the purchase of a package of Girl Scout Cookies and Girl Scout Fall Product Program products through participation in Council approved product sale donation programs.
- Girl Scouts forbids product demonstration parties where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business (For example: In home product parties). Any business using the Girl Scout trademark must seek authorization from GSUSA
- Group money-earning activities need to be suited to the age and abilities of the girls and consistent with the principles of the GSLE.
- Money earned is for Girl Scout activities and is not to be retained by individuals. Girls can, however, be awarded incentives and/or may earn credits from their Girl Scout product sales. Funds acquired through group money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the group, while following council procedures.
- The spirit of acquiring donations for troops should be on a very small scale. **Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not provide letters for tax purposes for donations given to Girl Scout Troops and/or communities.**

Other money earning activities may include:

**Collections/Drives:**
- Cell phones for refurbishment
- Used ink cartridges turned in for money
- Christmas tree recycling

**Food/Meal Events:**
- Lunch box auction (prepared lunch or meal auctioned off)
- Themed meals, like high tea, Indian meal, Mexican dinner (if girls are earning money for travel, tie the meal to their destination)

**Service(s):**
- Service-a-thon (people sponsor a girl doing service; funds go to support trip)
- Babysitting for holiday (New Year’s Eve) or council events
- Raking leaves, weeding, cutting grass, shoveling snow, walking pets
- Cooking class or other specialty class

The best way to earn money for your group is to start with Girl Scout cookie activities and other council-sponsored product sales. From there, your group may decide to earn additional funds on its own.
Council Procedures for Additional Troop/Group Money Earning

If a troop/group requires money-earning activities beyond the Council product programs for a specific purpose then the following guidelines must be met:

Troop/groups must:

- Participate in a product program in a 12-month period.
- Support the Council’s Annual Family Giving Campaign by asking each family to participate.
- Obtain permission from each participating girl’s parent or guardian before any money-earning activity occurs.

Other activities must be approved in advance by the Council by following this procedure:

1) Submit a “Troop Money Earning Application” along with the latest copy of the troop/group’s bank statement to the appropriate community team member. The community team designee is charged with certifying the application and submitting it to the Troop Support Specialist at least one month prior to the event.

2) Complete and submit to the community team designee a report on the results of the money-earning activity within three weeks after the activity.

3) Money Earning Activities must:
   a) Not coincide with either Council product program.
   b) Be in keeping with the principles for which the organization stands as defined in Volunteer Essentials.

4) Solicitation of funds-Fund Raising/In-Kind Donations
   a) Girls cannot solicit funds (cash) for their troop or Award (Bronze/Silver/Gold) or Take Action projects. Asking others to cover the cost associated with an Award project is not considered the appropriate way of earning a Girl Scout Highest Award or completing Take Action projects. Girls should establish their own money-earning projects in order to raise needed funds.
   b) Solicitation or acceptance of cash is prohibited for ALL troops/groups or individuals.
   c) Communities, troops/groups and individuals on behalf of any Girl Scout group must have permission, in writing, from the Council’s Development Department before contacting any organization, business, corporation, or foundation for in-kind donations. The council is the only distinct legal entity with tax exemption. Communities and troops are not 501 (c)(3) organizations and cannot enter into agreements or submit grant proposals on behalf of the council. To obtain permission or for additional information please email Jill Pollard, jpollard@gsle.org, with the name and contact info for the organization, etc. and the dollar value of the gift-in-kind request.
   d) Girl Scouts, in their capacity as Girl Scout Troops/Groups, MAY NOT solicit or raise funds for any other organization. This includes participating in walk-a-thons, telethons, product parties such as Tupperware, Pampered Chef, Mary Kay or other similar home party sales, the sale of commercial products or similar fundraising opportunities. Girl Scouts Louisiana East as a 501(3) (c) entity does conduct adult-generated fund raising activities for troops/groups.

Girl Scouts can elect to support another organization through take-action projects or by making a donation from the troop/group’s account.
Collaborating with Sponsors and Other Organizations

Sponsors help Girl Scout Councils ensure that all girls in the community have an opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting. Community organizations, businesses, religious organizations, and individuals may be sponsors and may provide group meeting places, volunteer their time, offer in-kind donations, provide activity materials, or loan equipment. The sponsor’s contribution can then be recognized by arranging for the girls to send thank-you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take-Action project. The spirit of acquiring donations for troops should be on a very small scale. Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not provide letters for tax purposes for donations given to Girl Scout troops and/or communities.

When collaborating with any other organization, keep these additional guidelines in mind:

- **Avoiding fundraising for other organizations:** Girl Scouts are not allowed, when identifying ourselves as Girl Scouts (such as wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on), to solicit money on behalf of another organization. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. You and your group can, however, support another organization through take-action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in whatever events they choose, as long as they’re not wearing anything that officially identifies them as “Girl Scouts.”

- **Steering clear of political fundraisers:** When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying yourselves as Girl Scouts, your group may not participate (directly or indirectly) in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Letter-writing campaigns are not allowed, nor is participating in a political rally, circulating a petition, or carrying a political banner.

- **Being respectful when collaborating with religious organizations:** Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no girl should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.

- **Avoiding selling or endorsing commercial products:** “Commercial products” is any product sold at retail. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products.

For information on working with a sponsor, consult the Council. Guidance on the availability of sponsors, recruiting responsibility, and any Council policies or practices that must be followed can be given. The Council may already have relationships with certain organizations, or may know of some reasons not to collaborate with certain organizations.

Financial Assistance

Girl Scouts Louisiana East Annual Family Giving campaign supports the Council’s financial assistance program in addition to Council programming and properties. Financial Assistance is designed to help registered Girl Scouts (girls and adults) participate in Girl Scout activities where financial considerations might otherwise hinder such participation.

**Membership Financial Assistance**

Membership financial assistance may be requested by the troop/group leader/advisor on behalf of the girl to cover GSUSA registration fee. To receive membership financial assistance troop leaders must submit the “Application for Girls Membership Dues Assistance” form at the time of registration. The Council Membership Department makes decisions regarding membership financial assistance. Membership financial assistance is
only given one time by the Council. Troop/groups should make plans during their money earning activities to assist each girl re-registering.

**Helping Girls Reach Their Financial Goals**

**Setting Realistic Goals**

Girl Scouting gives girls opportunities to plan activities they might not have considered on their own. Troop/group leaders/advisors should encourage girls to develop a realistic plan to achieve those goals. If troops/groups are asking families to pay a portion of an activity cost, they should consider what is realistic for the majority of their families.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is so well known in communities, it’s likely that your girls will already know a bit about it and want to get out there to start selling as soon as possible. But it’s important that the girls have a clear plan and purpose for their product-sale activities. One of your opportunities as a volunteer is to facilitate girl-led financial planning, which may include the following steps for the girls:

1. **Set goals for money-earning activities.** What do girls hope to accomplish through this activity? In addition to earning money, what skills do they hope to build? What leadership opportunities present themselves?

2. **Create a budget.** Use a budget worksheet that includes both expenses (the cost of supplies, admission to events, travel, and so on) and available income (the group’s account balance, projected cookie proceeds, and so on).

3. **Determine how much the group needs to earn.** Subtract expenses from available income to determine how much money your group needs to earn.

4. **Make a plan.** The group can brainstorm and make decisions about its financial plans. Will cookie and other product sales—if approached proactively and energetically—earn enough money to meet the group’s goals? If not, which group money-earning activities might offset the difference in anticipated expense and anticipated income? Will more than one group money-earning activity be necessary to achieve the group’s financial goals? In this planning stage, engage the girls through the Girl Scout processes (girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning) and consider the value of any potential activity. Have them weigh feasibility, implementation, and safety factors.

5. **Write it out.** Once the group has decided on its financial plan, describe it in writing. If the plan involves a group money-earning activity, fill out an application for approval from your Council and submit it along with the budget worksheet the girls created.

**Remember:** It’s great for girls to have opportunities, like the Girl Scout Cookie Program, to earn funds that help them fulfill their goals as part of the GSLE. As a volunteer, try to help girls balance the money-earning they do with opportunities to enjoy other activities that have less emphasis on earning and spending money. Take Action projects, for example, may not always require girls to spend a lot of money!
**Reviewing Financial and Sales Abilities by Grade Level**

As with other activities, girls progress in their financial and sales abilities as they get older. This section gives you some examples of the abilities of girls at each grade level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl Scout Daisies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and does all group budgeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/guardians may decide they will contribute to the cost of activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls can participate in Girl Scout cookie activities and other Council-sponsored product sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daisies are always paired with an adult when selling anything. Girls do the asking and deliver the product, but adults handle the money and keep the girls secure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl Scout Brownies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and shares some of the group-budgeting responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls discuss the cost of activities (supplies, fees, transportation, rentals, and so on).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls set goals for and participate in Council-sponsored product sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls may decide to pay dues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl Scout Juniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The group volunteer retains overall responsibility for long-term budgeting and record-keeping, but shares or delegates all other financial responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls set goals for and participate in Council-sponsored product sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls decide on group dues, if any. Dues are collected by girls and recorded by a group treasurer (selected by the girls).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls budget for the short-term needs of the group, on the basis of plans and income from the group dues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls budget for more long-term activities, such as overnight trips, group camping, and special events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Bronze Award, if they are pursuing it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Girls estimate costs based on plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Girls determine the amount of group dues (if any) and the scope of money-earning projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Girls carry out budgeting, planning, and group money-earning projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Girls budget for extended travel, Take Action projects, and leadership projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Girls may be involved in seeking donations for Take Action projects, with Council approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Girls keep their own financial records and give reports to parents and group volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Silver or Gold Awards, if they are pursuing them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix: For Troop Volunteers

Girls and adults participating in troops, take part in exciting activities throughout the school year, and meet once a week, once a month, or twice a month—how often is up to you and the girls. Troops can meet just about anywhere, as long as the location is safe, easily accessible to girls and adults, and within a reasonable commute. Reasonable is subjective and has different definitions in different areas: In rural areas, a two-hour drive may be acceptable; in an urban area, a 30-minute subway ride may be too long. In each meeting, girls participate in fun activities that engage them in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. **Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not allow troops to meet in the home.**

Troops provide a flexible way for girls to meet for nine to 12 months. Some ideas include:

- Fourteen Girl Scout Brownies who meet twice a month from November through March at a local community center
- Seven girls who are homeschooled and meet weekly as a Girl Scout Cadette troop
- Girls who meet together once a week at their house of worship to participate in Girl Scout activities

Understanding Your Role as a Troop/Group Volunteer

You can refer to your volunteer position description for a complete list of your responsibilities as a Girl Scout Volunteer. In this section, we will discuss your specific role as a troop/group volunteer.

**Qualifications**

In order to qualify to be a troop volunteer, you must:

1. Register as an adult member of Girl Scouts of the USA
2. Complete the annual Volunteer Application and Background Screening process
3. Accept and adhere to the purpose and principles of Girl Scouting
4. Show a willingness to work with diverse groups with varying life styles and cultures in a positive manner
5. Recognize, understand, accept, interpret, and support all Council goals, policies, and objectives
6. Complete required training
7. Owe no outstanding debt to the Council
8. Have knowledge of up-to-date Girl Scout program and community resources
9. Maintain patience, warmth, and strong human relations skills
10. Have a genuine liking for and an interest in girls’ success and the time to devote to them.
11. Demonstrate planning, organizational, and problem-solving abilities.

Troop volunteers are selected and appointed annually by the Troop Support Specialist or Community Administrator to whom they are accountable.
The Community Team

You may team up with co-volunteer(s), parents/guardians, members of the community, Council staff members, and others who have expressed interest in working alongside you.

Remember to call on your volunteer support team, which can help you observe a meeting, assign you a mentor, help with registration forms, assist you with opening a bank account, plan your first meeting, and so on. Also each troop must be represented at their community meetings—usually held several times throughout the year—that provide excellent opportunities to learn from other volunteers.

Community Administrator:
- Can explain taking a troop trip.
- Can help if you can't reach the troop organizer/mentor.
- Can help you get forms.
- Can explain a community meeting.
- Can clarify your goals.
- Can clarify/interpret community team roles.
- Helps you obtain existing or new troop checking accounts

Recruiter:
- Assigns girls to your troop.
- Can help if you have too few girls.
- Can suggest a meeting place.
- Can help you with a parent problem.

GSLE Coach:
- Supports, assists and motivates volunteers by grade level to assist them in transferring their passion and personal skill set into the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) for all girls.
- Participates in assessment and re-engagement process for volunteers.

Product Sales Manager:
- Provides oversight, guidance and assistance with product programs.

Forming a Troop Committee

You will want to involve other adults in the troop—there’s no need to go it alone or depend on too few adults! Many hands make light work, and the role is more fun when it’s shared. Think about the people you know whom you admire, who connect with children (especially girls), who are dependable and responsible, and who realistically have time to spend volunteering. (Remember that these adults will need to register as Girl Scout members, fill out volunteer application forms, take online learning sessions, and review written resources.) Consider business associates, neighbors, former classmates, friends, and so on. If you have trouble finding reliable, quality volunteers to assist, talk to your volunteer support team for advice and support. And feel free to use the sample welcome letter and friends/family checklist in the Girl Scout Daisy, Brownie, and Junior Leadership Journeys to assist you in expanding your troop’s adult network.

Remember: Be sure every volunteer reviews and follows the 12 Girl Scout Safety Guidelines, available in the Quick-Start Guide to this handbook.

Your troop committee members might help by:
- Filling in for you
- Arranging meeting places
• Locating adults with expertise on a topic of special interest to girls
• Assisting with trips and chaperoning
• Managing troop records

A troop committee may be made up of general members or may include specific positions, such as
• **Assistant Troop Leader/Advisor:** This can be one person or this position can be filled by several people. Two unrelated adults must be present at all Girl Scout functions. Must complete leader training.
• **Cookie Manager:** A volunteer who would manage all aspects of Girl Scout Cookie program. Trained by GSLE Product Sales Department.
• **Transportation Coordinator:** The volunteer you would look to whenever you need to transport girls for any reason; this person would have volunteers available to drive and chaperone
  ▪ Provide driver with a Driver's Packet of Information, which includes permission slips, map, emergency procedures, directions to the destinations, and contact person. This packet is given to the event leader upon arrival at the destination.
  ▪ Driver notifies the contact person if there is a problem in route.
  ▪ In the event of an accident, the driver should follow the crisis communication procedures located on their emergency card.
  ▪ Check local areas for car seat regulations.
• **Record Keeper:** A treasurer/secretary rolled into one person—someone to keep track of the money and keep the books
• **First Aider:** There are activities where a trained troop first aider is required. Review First Aider requirements listed on the Council website at [www.gsle.org](http://www.gsle.org) for determining when one should be present and what first aid qualifications are recognized by GSUSA.
• **Camp Consultant:** An adult who has completed required camp training for overnight camping trips
• **Annual Family Giving Captain:** An adult who gives families the opportunity to support the Council through a financial contribution by asking for a specific gift or contribution or organizes an event whose proceeds benefit the Council.
• **Fall Product Manager:** A volunteer who would manage all aspects of the Fall Product programs. Trained by GSLE Product Sales Department.
• **Money Manager:** Assists girls in planning their budget and record keeping.
• **Resource People:** Those who can help you and the girls in any area they are skilled.
• **Accompanying Adults:** All adult volunteers working directly with girls must be at least 18 years old, registered members of Girl Scouts, and must be screened by our Council before volunteering.
• **Contact Person:** Notifies parents of emergencies, delays, or major changes so that the troop leader only has to take time to make one phone call. Must be an adult who will be reachable during activity. Does not need to attend Council adult learning sessions.

Set up roles that work for you, and draw on other volunteers who possess skill sets that you may lack. When you’re ready to invite parents, neighbors, friends, colleagues, and other respected adults to partner with you, invite them to their first troop committee meeting.

**Holding Troop Meetings**

The sample sessions in the online volunteer toolkit and Leadership Journey adult guides will give you ideas about how to plan and hold successful troop meetings that allow girls to Discover, Connect, and Take Action as they have fun with a purpose. (See the “Girl Scouting as a National Experience” chapter of this handbook for
more on the three processes.) Many volunteers find it helpful to think of meetings having six parts, as outlined below, but feel free to structure the meeting in a way that makes sense for you and the girls.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As Girls Arrive</th>
<th>Start-up activities are planned so that when girls arrive at the meeting they have something to do until the meeting begins. For younger girls, it could be coloring pages; teen girls might jot down a journal entry or just enjoy a little time to talk.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>The opening focuses the meeting and allows girls to start the meeting. Each troop decides how to open their own meeting—most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, and then add a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other ceremony designed by the girls. Girl Scout Brownies, for example, might create a new tradition by skipping in a circle while singing a song. Ceremonies, even when brief or humorous, make Girl Scout time special. The Journey adult guides contain ideas about openings that correspond to Journey themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Troop business may include taking attendance, collecting dues, making announcements, and planning an upcoming event or trip. This is a good time for girls to take turns leading, especially as they grow up! (Some troops may move the business portion of the meeting to an earlier or later slot.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Activities will depend on what the girls want to do in their troop and how they want to spend their collective time. Outdoor time is important, so encourage the girls to do an activity in a park or forest. If girls are interested in animals, encourage the girls to plan a visit to a zoo or animal shelter. As you engage in one of the three National Leadership Journeys, review the “Sample Sessions at a Glance” in the adult guide for Journey activity ideas. Treats are an option some troops decide to include in their meetings and range from a bottle of soap bubbles or a jump rope to a food snack. If girls choose to include snacks, guide them to consider the health of a potential snack, as well as possible food allergies. Enlist the help of parents or guardians by asking them to sign up and bring a treat. You’ll also find plenty of snack ideas and signup forms in the adult guide of most Leadership Journeys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean-up</td>
<td>Clean-up is a great habit for girls to get their meeting space back to the way it was when they arrived—maybe even cleaner! Girls can also take leadership of the cleaning themselves, deciding who does what. They might even enjoy the tradition of a kaper (chore) chart which lists all the chores and assigns girls’ names to each, so that everyone takes turns at each responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing</td>
<td>The closing lets the girls know that the troop meeting is ending. Many girls close with the friendship circle, in which each girl stands in a circle, puts her right arm over her left, and holds the hand of the girl standing next to her. The friendship squeeze is started by one girl, and then passed around the circle until it comes back to the girl who started it. When the squeeze is finished, girls twist clockwise out of the circle lifting their arms and turning around and out of the circle. In addition, you may find some helpful, Journey-related closing ceremony ideas in the Journey’s adult guide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You help each troop member do her part to ensure the meeting and activities are enriching and fun. Based on their grade levels and abilities, girls may decide and plan opening and closing activities, bring and prepare treats, teach songs or games, and clean up. As girls grow, they can show and teach younger members about Girl Scouting. They can also assist you in preparing materials for activities. For trips, campouts, parent meetings, and multi-troop events, girls may be responsible for shopping, packing equipment, handing out...
programs, cleaning up, gathering wood, and so on. As long as you pay attention to grade level and maturity, what girls can do is endless!

How to Make a Kaper Chart

1. Write down the tasks to be done and a brief description of what each job includes.
2. Plan how to divide the work: individual, buddies, group or troop.
3. Combine some tasks if necessary, keeping an equal amount of work in each if possible.
4. Have girls make a chart, which shows the group, who does what, and when.

Letting Girls Lead

Many troops employ a democratic system of governance so that all members have the opportunity to express their interests and feelings and share in the planning and coordination of activities. Girls partner with you and other adults, and you facilitate, act as a sounding board, and ask and answer questions. Girls from Daisies through Ambassadors will gain confidence and leadership skills when given the opportunity to lead their activities, learn cooperatively as a group, and learn by doing instead of by observing.

The following are some traditions troops have used for girl-led governance, but these are just examples. National Leadership Journeys offer examples of team decision-making, too.

- **Daisy/Brownie Circle:** While sitting in a circle (sometimes called a ring), girls create a formal group decision-making body. The circle is an organized time for girls to express their ideas and talk about activities they enjoy, and you play an active role in facilitating discussion and helping them plan. Girls often vote to finalize decisions. If girls are talking over each other, consider passing an object, such as a talking stick, that entitles one girl to speak at a time.

- **Junior/Cadette/Senior/Ambassador Patrol or Team System:** In this system, large troops divide into small groups, with every member playing a role. Teams of four to six girls are recommended so that each girl gets a chance to participate and express her opinions. Patrols may be organized by interests or activities that feed into a take-action project, with each team taking responsibility for some part of the total project, and girls may even enjoy coming up with names for their teams.

- **Junior/Cadette/Senior/Ambassador Executive Board:** In the executive board system (also called a steering committee); one leadership team makes decisions for the entire troop. The board’s responsibility is to plan activities and assign jobs based on interests and needs, and the rest of the troop decides how to pass their ideas and suggestions to the executive board throughout the year. The executive board usually has a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer and holds its own meetings to discuss troop matters. Limit the length of time each girl serves on the executive board so all troop members can participate during the year.

- **Junior/Cadette/Senior/Ambassador Town Meeting:** Under the town meeting system, business is discussed and decisions are made at meetings attended by all the girls in the troop. As in the patrol and executive board systems, everyone gets the chance to participate in decision-making and leadership. Your role is to act as a moderator, who makes sure everyone gets a chance to talk and that all ideas are considered.

As a Girl Scout volunteer, you can use the 10 Essential Elements, listed below, to partner with girls and their families, whether your troop meets for a few months or over the course of a year. To support you in the important work you do with girls, we’re offering the following resources at
http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/quickstart/ for each Essential Element. Many of these resources are pulled directly from the Adult Guides for the National Leadership Journeys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Essential Elements for Creating the Girl Scout Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WELCOME FAMILIES TO GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHOW GIRLS THEY BELONG TO A BIG SISTERHOOD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GUIDE GIRLS TO DEVELOP AS LEADERS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPOWER GIRLS TO TAKE ACTION IN THEIR COMMUNITIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORT GIRLS TO BUILD SKILLS THROUGH PROFICIENCY BADGES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPAND GIRLS’ VIEW OF THE WORLD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CELEBRATE WITH CEREMONIES AND TRADITIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USE A GIRL-FRIENDLY APPROACH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENCOURAGE GIRLS TO EARN AND LEARN THROUGH THE GIRL SCOUT COOKIE PROGRAM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INSPIRE GIRLS TO CONTINUE GROWING THROUGH GIRL SCOUTS</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at a Sample Troop Year

**Girl Scouts Louisiana East Volunteer Toolkit!**

Here is just one example of how you could set up your troop year.

- Hold a parent/guardian meeting.
- Open a checking account.
- Register all the girls in the troop.
- Meet together for the first time, allowing the girls to decide how they can learn each others’ names and find out more about each other.
- Kick off a Leadership Journey with the opening ceremony recommended in the first sample session, or a trip or special event that fits the theme. Have the girls brainstorm a kickoff.
- Enjoy the full Journey, including its Take Action project.
- Along the way, add in related badge activities that girls will enjoy and that will give them a well-rounded year.
- Have the girls plan, budget for, and “earn and learn” in the Girl Scout Cookie Program.
- Help girls plan a field trip or other travel opportunity.
- Encourage girls to plan a culminating ceremony for the Journey, including awards presentations, using ideas in the Journey girls’ book and/or adult guide.
- Pre-register girls for next year.
- Camp out!
- Participate in a Council-wide event with girls from around your region.
- Have the girls plan and hold a bridging ceremony for girls continuing on to the next Girl Scout grade level.

**Girl Scouts of the USA & Girl Scouts Louisiana East Dates**

- Fall Product Program Orders – September/October
- Annual Family Giving campaign – Campaign is year round, although Community goals recognition is earned during August – December timeframe
- Juliette Low’s Birthday – October 31
- Fall Product Delivery – November
- Cookie Orders – January
- World Thinking Day – February 22
- Juliette Low World Friendship Fund
- Cookie Delivery – late February
- Cookie Booth Programs – March
- Girl Scout Birthday – March 12
- Girl Scout Week – week of March 12th
- Girl Scouts Louisiana East Annual Meeting – April
- Girl Scout Leader’s Day – April 22

**Troop/Group, Community, Region dates:**

- Community Meetings
- Region Meetings – spring & fall
- Holidays
- Fly-up, Bridging
- Court of Awards
- Community Events and Encampments
- Field Trips (nature, library, Council events etc.)
- Other Troop Plans
Appendix: For Travel Volunteers

Not only do some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout’s life happen while taking trips, but travel also offers a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership skills. This appendix helps you prepare girls for local, regional, or international travel of any scope and duration.

Juliette Low World Friendship Fund

To honor Juliette Gordon Low’s love of travel, of experiencing different cultures, and of making friends, Girl Scouts created the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund in 1927. Today, this fund supports girls’ international travel, participation in adult learning, and attendance at other international events—any event that fosters global friendships that connect Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from 145 countries. Go to www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global/juliette_low_fund.asp to find out more or to donate to the fund!

Traveling with Girls (other than Council camp sites)

Girls love trips. And Girl Scouts is a great place for them to learn how to plan and take exciting trips, because travel is built on a progression of activities—that is, one activity leads to the next. Girl Scout Daisies, for example, can begin with a discovery walk. As girls grow in their travel skills and experience and can better manage the planning process, they progress to longer trips. The Journey Adult Guides have a lot of other ideas about trips that bring the Journey to life. Here are some examples of the progression of events and trips in Girl Scouting’s Ladder of Leadership:

- **Short trips to local points of interest (Daisies and older):** A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies.
- **Overnight Camping (Daisies and older):** A Daisy troop may participate in an occasional overnight camping experience. Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights.
- **Day trip (Brownies and older):** An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal)—younger girls can select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home.
- **Overnight trips (Brownies and older):** One (or possibly two) nights away to a state or national park, historic city, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground. These short trips are just long enough to whet their appetites, but not long enough to generate homesickness.
- **Extended overnight trips* (Juniors and older):** Three or four nights camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls’ home region (for example, New England, the Upper Midwest, the Southeast, the Pacific Northwest, and so on). Planning a trip to a large museum—and many offer unique opportunities for girls to actually spend the night on museum grounds—makes for an exciting experience for girls.
- **National trips* (Cadettes and older):** Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of ordinary recreational trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component such as incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country.
• **International trips** *(Cadettes and older)*: Travel around the world, often requiring one or two years of preparation. International trips are available to Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight trips with Girl Scouting. When girls show an interest in traveling abroad, contact your council to get permission to plan the trip and download the [Global Travel Toolkit](https://www.girlscouts.org). Adult volunteers should ensure that girls are mature enough to participate in the trip. Factors to consider are adaptability, good decision-making, previous cross-cultural experience, group dynamics, team capability, language skills (where applicable), and specific skills and interests related to the trip. Visiting one of the [four World Centers](https://www.girlscouts.org) is a great place to start, but also consider traveling with international service-learning organizations. Girls have traveled to rural Costa Rica to volunteer at elementary schools, to Mexico to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, and to India to work with girls living in poverty in urban slums. WAGGGS World Centers or your Girl Scout Council may have additional guidelines regarding age requirements.

*Girl Scouts Louisiana East requires travel training for extended trips lasting 3 or more nights.*

All trip plans and destinations should be based on the “girls” skills regardless of the number of adults attending. To ensure the girls’ trips have the necessary leadership experience, the number of adults attending should be based on the minimum adult/girl ratio for their program level with rare exceptions made for extra adults.

Although some girls who are in a group (for example, a troop of Cadettes) may decide to travel together, opportunities exists for girls who are not otherwise involved in Girl Scouts to get together specifically for the purpose of traveling locally, regionally, and even internationally. Girls can travel regardless of how else they are—or aren’t—participating in Girl Scouting.

**Girl Scouts Louisiana East – Program Grade Level Travel Guidelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Grade Level</th>
<th>Day Trip Travel Guidelines</th>
<th>Overnight Trip Travel Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Daisies</td>
<td>Occasional trips no further than <strong>50 miles</strong> round trip from their meeting place.**</td>
<td>Family overnights only. At least one parent must accompany the child. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Brownies</td>
<td>May travel as a troop up to <strong>120 miles</strong> round trip from their meeting place. *</td>
<td>May travel as a troop up to <strong>240 miles</strong> round trip from their meeting place. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors</td>
<td>May travel up to <strong>150 miles</strong> round trip from their meeting place.</td>
<td>May travel up to <strong>325 miles</strong> round trip from their meeting place. ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls 11-13 years old</td>
<td>Day travel is <strong>unlimited</strong></td>
<td>Travel is <strong>unlimited</strong> in the continental United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls 14-17 years old</td>
<td>Day travel is <strong>unlimited</strong></td>
<td>Overnight travel is <strong>unlimited</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*GSLE supports travel opportunities for girls and promotes their leadership development by allowing only the required minimum of adults per program age level.*

**The mileage guidelines do not restrict troops/groups from leaving GSLE Council jurisdiction and does not apply to troops/groups traveling to Girl Scouts Louisiana East camp property and/or GSLE Council sponsored events and activities.*
**Girl Scout Juniors - The mileage guidelines do not restrict troops/groups from leaving GSLE Council jurisdiction and does not apply to troops/groups traveling to Girl Scout Louisiana East or GSUSA sponsored events and activities (i.e. Juliette Low Birthplace).**

*Using Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting is a requirement when girl’s are planning their Travels*

Girl Scout travel is an ideal way to offer girls leadership opportunities. Encourage girls to choose one of the three series of National Leadership Journeys. The Journey’s theme will give girls a way to explore leadership through their travels. Use the adult guide to incorporate activities and discussions that help girls explore the Three Keys to Leadership (Discover, Connect, and Take Action) as they plan their trip and eventually travel.

Tying your trip to the topic of a Leadership Journey is a cinch. For example, if Cadette girls have chosen *Media*, before their trip they can read online newspapers from the area to which they’re traveling—and evaluate when they arrive how well the media reflects the realities there. If Senior girls are using *SOW WHAT*, they can plan to observe agricultural practices in other parts of the country or around the world. Ambassadors using *BLISS: Live It! Give It!* can build a trip around dreaming big—and empowering others in their community to dream big, too.

If girls also want to complete skill-building badge requirements as part of their trip, they can. The most obvious example is the Senior Traveler badge, which fits perfectly into planning a trip. In addition, girls can explore other badge topics, depending on the focus of their trip. For examples, Cadettes can explore the food in other regions or countries for their New Cuisines badge, Seniors can find out about international business customs as part of their Business Etiquette badge, and Ambassadors can work on their Photography badge while documenting their trip.

Be sure to visit the “Girl Scouting as a National Experience” chapter in this handbook to find out more about the three exciting series of Journeys and *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting*.

To ensure that any travel you do with girls infuses the Girl Scout Leadership Experience at every opportunity, limit your role to facilitating the girls’ brainstorming and planning—but never doing the work for them. Allow the girls to lead, learn collaboratively, and learn by doing (and by making mistakes). All the while, however, provide ideas and insight, ask tough questions when you have to, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement!

*Include girls with disabilities.* Communicate with girls with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. Make sure that reasonable accommodations are made for girls with disabilities. Learn more about the resources and information that [Global Explorers](#) and [Wilderness Inquiries](#) provide to people with disabilities.

### Travel Progression Checklist

If your group is thinking about travel, consider first whether the girls are mature enough to handle the trip. Determine a group’s readiness for travel by assessing the girls’:

- Ability to be away from their parents and their homes
- Ability to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and situations
- Ability to make decisions for themselves and the good of the group well and easily
- Previous cross-cultural experiences
Letting Girls Lead

Whether the trip is a day hike or a cross-country trek, the basic steps of trip planning are essentially the same. It’s true that as the locale gets farther away, the itinerary more complex, and the trip of greater duration, the details become richer and more complex, but planning every trip—from a day-long event to an international trek—starts by asking the following:

- What do we hope to experience?
- Who will we want to talk to and meet? What will we ask?
- Where are we interested in going?
- When are we all available to go?
- Will everyone in our group be able to go?
- Are there physical barriers that cannot be accommodated?
- What are visiting hours and the need for advance reservations?
- What are our options for getting there?
- What’s the least and most this trip could cost?
- What can we do now to get ourselves ready?
- How will we earn the money?
- What’s the availability of drinking water, restrooms, and eating places?
- Where is emergency help available?
- What safety factors must we consider?
- What will we do as we travel?
- What will we do when we get there?
- How will we share the Take Action story?

As girls answer these questions, they begin the trip-planning process. In time, girls can make specific arrangements, attend to a myriad of details, create a budget and handle money, and accept responsibility for their personal conduct and safety. Later, after they’ve returned from an event or trip, girls also have the chance to evaluate their experiences and share them with others.

Seeking Council Permission

Before most trips, you and the girls will need to obtain council permission, although your council may not require this information for trips of one day with no overnight stay. Check with your council for specifics, and also see whether specific forms must be filled out before traveling.

Before working with the girls to plan any trip a responsible adult who will be working with the girls and other adults must:

- Ensure all adults attending or participating in the trip have successfully completed the Volunteer Approval Process which includes completing a Volunteer Application and Background Screening and receiving approval from the Council.
- Be familiar with and understand the guidelines found in this publication and any additional Safety Activity Checkpoints related to the specific activity you are planning to participate in.
- Ensure that all appropriate, required, paperwork is complete. See required forms listed below.
**Girl Scouts Louisiana East - Travel Approval Procedures**

All trips outside of the troop/group meeting place and/or involving overnight experiences of *one or more nights* or *high risk* activities must be approved in advance of the trip – see chart below.

High risk activities include: Archery, backpacking, camping, challenge or adventure courses including indoor/outdoor climbing walls, activities involving horses, rafting/tubing/boating, swimming or downhill skiing.

Approval for your trip must be obtained in the time frame listed below. It is required that you have Community and/or GSLE Council approval *prior* to making reservations and/or placing any deposits.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East uses four forms for travel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Troop Trip Outing Form</th>
<th>Short Trip Form</th>
<th>Intent to Travel Form-A</th>
<th>Extended Travel Form-B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved by Community Administrator – a minimum of <em>four weeks</em> prior to first date of travel.</td>
<td>Approved by Director, Adult Support – a minimum of <em>four weeks</em> prior to first date of travel.</td>
<td>Approved by Director, Adult Support – a minimum of <em>6 months</em> prior to first date of travel.</td>
<td>Approved by Director, Adult Support – a minimum of <em>3 months</em> prior to first date of travel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table on this page will help ensure you are using the right form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Trip</th>
<th>Troop Trip Outing Form</th>
<th>Short Trip Form</th>
<th>Intent to Travel Form-A and Extended Travel Form-B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Day Trips</td>
<td></td>
<td>❖</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overnights in or out of Council Jurisdiction, one to two nights stay (and not to a Girl Scouts Louisiana East property).

|                        | ❖                       | ❖               | ❖                                                  |

Overnights in or out of Council Jurisdiction, three nights or longer (and not to a Girl Scouts Louisiana East property) or any international trip.

|                        | ❖                       |                        | ❖                                                  |

Encourage the girls to submit much of the information themselves, including the following:

- A detailed itinerary, including specific activities involved, mode of travel, and all dates and times
- Location and type of premises to be used
• Roster of girls who will be participating (parental permissions must be obtained)
• Names and contact information for the adults participating
• Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
• Participants’ skill levels, if applicable (language skills, backpacking or camping experience, and so on)
• Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
• Required agreements or contracts (for example, hiring a bus, use of premises). **Only the CEO of Girl Scouts Louisiana East is authorized to sign contracts.**
• Copies of a current driver’s license and proof of insurance for all drivers.

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**From the Birth of Girl Scouting to the World Centers**

*The Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace* in Savannah, Georgia, is a fantastic place for Girl Scout Juniors and older to visit. Reservations and Council approval are required to take a group of girls to visit the birthplace, and most educational opportunities are booked at least a year in advance, so book early! Families and individuals, however, do not need to reserve a tour in advance.

In addition, four lodges are available in England, Mexico, Switzerland, and India for use by Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, each with hostel- or dormitory-style accommodations. The world centers are operated by WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) and offer low-cost accommodations and special programs. They are also a great way to meet Girl Guides and Girl Scouts from around the world.

Closer to home, check with your Council to see whether Council-owned camps and other facilities can be rented out to the group of girls with which you’re working.

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**Involving Chaperones**

To determine how many volunteer chaperones the girls will need with them on the trip, see the adult-to-girl ratios. As you ask for chaperones, be sure to look for ones who are committed to:

• Being a positive role model
• Respecting all girls and adults equally, with no preferential treatment
• Creating a safe space for girls
• Prioritizing the safety of all girls
• Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement
• Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a sense of humor
• Creating an experience for and with girls
• Getting fit (appropriate to the trip)

Be sure every chaperone reviews and follows the 12 Girl Scout Safety Guidelines, available both in the Quick-Start Guide to this handbook and in the “Being Safety-Wise” chapter.

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**Guidelines and Procedures for Males Traveling with Girl Scouts**

Dads are often involved in the leadership of a Girl Scout troop. It is not uncommon for a man to be an assistant leader, a troop committee member, a certified first aid adult or the trained troop camper. There are no rules that preclude a male adult, who is invited by the troop, from troop camping with Girl Scouts. Common sense and prior planning will make camping with a male troop adult a positive experience. Follow these simple guidelines and enjoy your camping trip.
• Make sure the facility you reserve has a separate tent or room for your male camper to sleep in. It is not appropriate for males to sleep in the same tent or room with Girl Scouts in the troop setting. *This does not apply to the Council family camping program.*

• Males need to have bathroom facilities available that are not used by the girls. If only one bathroom is available, coordination of usage is of utmost concern. A sign posted when the bathroom is off limits to girls is a must. Facilities with separate male and female bathrooms are strongly suggested.

• Use common sense when married couples share overnight camping space at troop outings. There are no rules that state a husband and wife cannot sleep in the same tent or room. However, sexual behaviors of any kind are inappropriate at any Girl Scout function where girls are present. Girl Scouts should be sleeping in separate sleeping quarters from couples while troop camping.

• Males are required to follow all guidelines and standards regarding troop camping and Girl Scouting.

• Girl Scouts Louisiana East does not allow boys to participate in troop camping activities on Council properties. They may, however, camp during Councils family camping program. Many troop leaders and parents of Girl Scouts expect the Girl Scout camping experience to be a time when girls don’t have to worry about opposite sex related issues.

**A minimum of two unrelated adult females per 12 girls must be present at all times.**

---

**Transporting Girls**

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent’s decision and responsibility.

For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities—outside the normal time and place—in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

• Every driver must be an approved adult volunteer, at least 21 years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.

• Girls never drive other girls.

• If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios in *Volunteer Essentials* must be followed.

• If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the girl-volunteer ratios in *Volunteer Essentials* must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car (with a single adult driver) has at least two girls, and is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

For more about driving, see the **“Transporting Girls”** section of the **“Being Safety-Wise”** chapter of this handbook.
Tips for Girls Traveling Alone

If a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador will be traveling alone during any part of a trip, use the opportunity to help her feel comfortable with and capable of being on her own. Always talk first with her parents to assess her maturity and ability to handle herself, and have them complete an emergency form. If she is flying, also discuss the possibility of booking a nonstop flight to make her trip that much less stressful, and ask parents to contact the airline, which will make special arrangements for any unaccompanied minor. With the girl herself, develop a trip plan, discuss hotel security and safety, and talk about avoiding excess communication with strangers, not wearing a nametag, and avoiding exposing money or other items (such as smartphones, iPads, and iPods) that are attractive to pickpockets.

Staying Safe During the Trip

Also be sure to discuss the following items with the girls and their parents before you leave on any trip (you may also want to put this information in writing and have girls sign it):

- Who her buddy is—and how the buddy system works
- What to do if she is separated from the group, whether by accident or because of a crime
- What to do if she loses something significant: money, passport, luggage
- How to report a crime
- What to do if emergency help is needed
- How to perform basic first-aid procedures
- How to deal with a large crowd (if applicable)
- What to do in the event of a crime
- What behaviors you expect—and what consequences exist for not living up to those behaviors

Travel Security and Safety Tips

Share these safety tips with girls before you leave on any trip that involves a stay at a hotel, motel, hostel, or dormitory:

- Always lock the door behind you, using the deadbolt and the chain or anchor.
- Do not open the door for strangers; if hotel staff claims to be at the door, call the front desk to confirm.
- Don’t mention or display your room number when in the presence of strangers.
- Never leave jewelry, cameras, electronics, cash, or credit cards in your room.
- Never leave luggage unattended in the hotel lobby (or in an airport or train or bus station).
- When arriving at the hotel, locate emergency exits.
- Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag with your room key, wallet, passport, and cell phone. Take the flashlight and bag with you if you have to leave the room in an emergency.
- If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible. Don’t stop to pack your suitcase.
- Before leaving your room, feel the door: If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. Call the hotel operator immediately. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter.
- Contact the front desk to make sure girls’ rooms are cleared of any minibars or refrigerators. Also be sure the hotel doesn’t provide access to inappropriate movies on TVs and does not allow long-distance calls. Alert the hotel management that underage girls are staying in the hotel, and ask them to contact you if any girls are seen out of their rooms after bedtime.
Additional Resources

Raising Awesome Girls

From the time she came into your life, you've only wanted the best for your daughter. You want to see her feel happy and loved, be confident, make new friends, stay healthy, excel in school, and eventually rise up the ranks in a career she finds fulfilling. But you also want your girl to be independent, grow into her own person with her own unique strengths and beliefs, and to learn to use her voice. And all of that? Well, it can be overwhelming at times to say the least.

That's why we're happy to share straightforward, realistic, and proven parenting advice on everything and anything you might deal with when raising girls. From when to get a family pet and how to help her make new friends to more serious issues like bullying, discussions about current events, and school struggles, we've got you covered. Hand-in-hand, we can take the guesswork out of parenting and bring the fun back in.

For the full list of articles, visit: http://www.girlscouts.org/en/raising-girls.html
Glossary

**Adult Recognition:** There are several levels of recognition and awards for adults in Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts Louisiana East follows the GSUSA system of recognition for adults on Council, unit and individual levels. Refer to our Council website, www.gsle.org for complete criteria and information about the recognitions.

**Annual Family Giving Campaign:** Families of Girl Scouts and others in the community are invited to make a contribution to Girl Scouts Louisiana East each year. Their voluntary contributions help the Council provide the Girl Scout program for their daughters.

**Awards:** Insignia from the Girl Scout age-level books, GSUSA, religious/other organizations that are earned by completing the requirements or by demonstrating understanding of a concept.

**Birthplace:** Juliette Low's birthplace and home in Savannah, Georgia, now a Girl Scout National Center open to all Girl Scouts.

**Bridge:** An award that can be earned at the end of each program level as the girl is preparing for the next level. Information on bridging activities is in the handbooks.

**Bridging:** To advance from one program age level to another.

**Bronze Award:** Unofficial, casual term used to refer to the Girl Scout Bronze Award. This abbreviated term should not be used in written documents or official statements regarding this award.

**Buddies:** Partners in activities, assigning buddies ensure girls are always with another girl member.

**Camp Covington:** Purchased in 1927, a 23-acre site near Covington. Used for resident and troop camping, unit and Council events, and adult learning.

**Camp Marydale:** Located in St. Francisville and is a 400-acre site. Used for adult learning, resident, community and troop camping. Specializes in equestrian activities.

**Camp/Outdoor:** Camp/Outdoors allow girls to participate in and/or focus on environmental education. Day and weekend camping is offered during the school year while resident camp is generally offered during the summer months.

**Camp Whispering Pines:** Purchased in 1966, a 600-acre site near Independence. Used for resident and troop camping, unit events, adult training, swimming and waterfront activities.

**Charter (Girl Scout Council):** A Girl Scout Council charter is a credential issued by the National Board of Directors of the United States of America, to an organization exclusively devoted to the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, granting it the right to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in a specified jurisdiction that is established by the National Board of Directors and to call itself a Girl Scout Council. The Girl Scout Council charter defines the relationship between a Council and Girl Scouts of the USA. A Girl Scout Council charter is issued for no more than four years.

**Colors:** Flag raising ceremony.

**Community:** A geographic subdivision of Girl Scout membership within a region.
**Community Team**: A group of volunteers who administer Girl Scouting in the community. They recruit members, give support, and help to leaders.

**Council Annual Meeting**: The Council’s meeting held in either April or May where elected Council delegates, board of director members and board development committee members conduct Council business as provided in the Council Bylaws. All registered adults and girls 14 years and older are encouraged to attend.

**Council Shop**: A store located in the Council offices that carries Girl Scout uniforms, equipment, books, insignia, and much more.

**Counselor in Training (CIT)**: Summer resident camp program for Girl Scout Seniors - Ambassadors

**Court of Awards**: A ceremony, written and carried out by the girls, where they receive earned awards and insignia.

**Court of Honor**: A meeting of the patrol leaders, treasurer, scribe (secretary) of a Girl Scout Junior, Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador troop. The leader chairs the group and decisions are made, plans are discussed, problems are solved.

**Daisy Petals**: Noncompetitive embroidered award, consisting of 10 daisy petals that the leader uses to help Girl Scout Daisies explore the meaning of the Girl Scout Law. They are placed around the Promise Center as they are earned to form a daisy flower design.

**Daisy**: Juliette Low's nickname. See Juliette Low, See Girl Scout Daisies.

**Day Camp**: Camping by day only with girls returning home each night. Usually held during the summer, sessions are staffed by volunteers and held at various locations throughout the Council.

**Delegate (Council)**: Any registered Girl Scout adult member, elected as a voting member of the Council (corporation) by a specific geographic area or other entity established by the board of directors to represent them at the Council’s annual meeting. Delegates are elected for a specific term that is defined in the Council Bylaws. The number of delegates that geographic areas are allowed to elect is usually based on the total number of girls registered through the Council as of September 30.

**Delegate (National Council)**: Person elected by a Girl Scout Council as a member to the National Council (GSUSA Corporation). Each Council is entitled to elect one delegate and, in addition, one further delegate for each 1,800 girls under its jurisdiction who are members registered with Girl Scouts of the USA as of September 30 of the year preceding the regular session of the National Council. Girl Scout National Council delegates serve as members of the National Council for three years from the date of their election or until their successors are elected.

**Destinations**: National and international travel opportunities for Girl Scouts ages 11 – 17.

**Dunk Bag**: A net or porous dishcloth bag with a drawstring at the top, large enough to hold a mess kit or personal dishes. Clean dishes are placed in it and "dunked" into boiling water to sterilize and/or dry them. Used mainly for camping.

**Emblems**: Insignia that denote Girl Scout membership and identification at the national, Council, and troop levels.
Events – Events are for Girl Scouts who like to pick and choose from a menu of events that interest them most throughout the year. Have more than one passion? Maybe dance and horseback riding or photography. Girls can participate in as many events a year as they can fit into their busy schedules.

Executive Board System: One of three forms of troop government for Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Senior, or Ambassadors.

Financial Assistance: Financial assistance to help families meet the cost of their daughter's participation in programs such as day or resident camp sessions or Destinations. Financial assistance is funded by donations, investment income, and other Council monies. Forms are available from Community Administrators, on the Council website, www.gsle.org or at either Council office.

Flag: Flag raising/lowering ceremony

Fly-Up Ceremony: A ceremony where Girl Scout Brownies receive their “Girl Scout Brownie Wings” and "fly-up" to the next age level.

Friendship Circle: The Friendship Circle is formed in a meeting, at a campsite, or during a ceremony. Everyone stands in a circle and each person crosses her/his right arm over her/his left, clasping hands with friends on both sides. Everyone is silent as the leader makes a silent wish, and then squeezes the hand of the person to the left who does the same until the friendship squeeze returns to the leader. The leader may conclude the event by either saying “goodbye Girl Scouts,” leading the group in singing “Taps,” or some other indication that the squeeze has completed the circle. Everyone raises her or his right arm overhead and turns to the right to separate and leave. The Friendship Circle stands for an unbroken chain of friendship with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world.

Girl Guides: The term many countries use instead of "Girl Scouts."

The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting: New program resource that works with national Leadership Journeys to add skill-building to the skills girls learn through the three keys of Discover, Connect, and Take Action. Journeys are the only program resources that cover all 15 outcomes. Badges build specific skills and are primarily aimed at the Discover “Girls develop a strong sense of self” outcome. National Leadership journeys and The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting make up the GSUSA National Program Portfolio.

Girl Scout Ambassador: Registered girl who is in grades 11-12.

Girl Scout Birthday: March 12, the anniversary of the first Girl Scout troop meeting.

Girl Scout Bronze Award: The highest award that can be achieved by a Girl Scout Junior.

Girl Scout Brownie Ring: Girl Scout Brownies sit in a circle to discuss things, make choices and plan. This is their form of troop government.

Girl Scout Brownie Wings: Girl Scout Brownies receive their “wings” when they “fly-up” to Girl Scout Juniors. Only girls who have been Girl Scout Brownies can wear Girl Scout Brownie Wings on their Girl Scout Junior uniform.

Girl Scout Brownie: Registered girl who is in grades 2-3.

Girl Scout Daisy: Registered girl who is in kindergarten or grade 1.
Girl Scout Cadette: Registered girl who is in grades 6-8.

Girl Scout Council: A corporation chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA responsible for the development, management, and maintenance of Girl Scouting in a defined geographic area (jurisdiction).

Girl Scout Daisy Circle: Girl Scout Daisies sit in a circle where they learn the group decision making process that is such an important part of Girl Scouting. This is their form of troop government.

Girl Scout Gold Award: The highest award that can be achieved by a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador.

Girl Scout Handshake: A formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts and Girl Guides by shaking left hands while giving the Girl Scout sign with the right.

Girl Scout Junior: Registered girl who is in grades 4-5.

Girl Scout Law: Along with the Girl Scout Promise, the Girl Scout Law is the credo of Girl Scouting. A girl lives the 10 parts of the Girl Scout Law to fulfill the Girl Scout Promise.

Girl Scout Leadership Experience: National program model that engages girls in discovering themselves and their values, connecting with others, and taking action to make the world a better place.

Girl Scout Leadership Experience Coach: Volunteer who supports, assists and motivates other volunteers by grade level. A Girl Scout leadership expert.

Girl Scout Promise: Along with the Girl Scout Law, is the credo of Girl Scouting; the pledge that binds members together as part of the Girl Scout Movement. A girl must make the Promise to become a Girl Scout member.

Girl Scout Sabbath/Sunday: Observed during Girl Scout Week, both days give girls an opportunity to attend their place of worship and be recognized as a Girl Scout. If a place of worship is the group sponsor, girls may perform a service, such as greeting, ushering, or doing a flag ceremony. These days can also be a time when girls explore other faiths.

Girl Scout Senior: Registered girl who is in grades 9-10.

Girl Scout Silver Award: The highest award that can be achieved by a Girl Scout Cadette.

Girl Scout Week: The week during which March 12 (Girl Scout Birthday) falls. Begins with Girl Scout Sunday and ends with Girl Scout Sabbath. Troops or communities often participate in special programs held during this week.

Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA): The parent Girl Scout Corporation chartered by a special act of Congress that promotes the Girl Scout Movement in this country.

Girl Scouts Own: A non-religious, inspirational, girl-planned event centered on a theme such as nature, patriotism, friendship, peace, etc. Usually consists of poetry, prose, songs, and quotes.

Gold Award: Unofficial, casual term used to refer to the Girl Scout Gold Award. This abbreviated term should not be used in written documents or official statements regarding this award.

Insignia: The umbrella term used to refer to all official items that girls may wear on the uniform.
**Investiture:** The first time a girl or an adult makes the Girl Scout Promise, agrees to abide by the Law, and receives the Girl Scout pin. This occurs one time in a person's life. Girls and adults are usually invested in a special ceremony. Rededication occurs in the following years.

**Journeys:** A key component of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is the Leadership Journey, a coordinated series of activities grouped around a theme. Each Journey is tied to some of Girl Scouts' 15 national outcomes for girls, as defined in the Girl Scout Model. These outcomes are integral to the three leadership keys, Discover, Connect, and Take Action. National Leadership Journeys and *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* make up the GSUSA National Program Portfolio.


**Juliette Low World Friendship Fund:** A fund to which Girl Scouts throughout the USA contribute each year. The fund sponsors international exchange projects and other activities used to help build friendship and better understanding around the world through Girl Scouting.

**Kaper Chart:** A chart that lists jobs to be done, names of girls, and dates/times jobs are to be done. It's one way of rotating job responsibilities for all to share equally.

**Kapers:** A job or chore done during a meeting, trip or project.

**Mcfadden Cabin:** Located in City Park, New Orleans. Currently unavailable for use.

**Membership Dues:** Also known as "registration." All girls and adults pay this to GSUSA annually when they register as members of the organization.

**Motto** (The Girl Scout motto): "Be Prepared."

**National Centers:** Program and training centers owned and operated by Girl Scouts of the USA. These are the Edith Macy Conference Center and John J. Creedon Education Center in Briarcliff Manor, New York and the Juliette Gordon Low Girl Scout National Center in Savannah, Georgia.

**Nosebag:** A lunch that does not need cooking.

**Parent/Guardian Permission for Troop Outing:** Contains girl’s health history, parent permission for girl to participate in activities and authorizes leaders to secure emergency care for girl, if necessary. This form must be signed by parent prior to each activity. Leaders should take these forms with them on the activity.

**Partner:** A group, individual, organization, etc. which lends moral (not necessarily monetary) support to a troop.

**Patches (Participation or Fun Patches):** The focus is on participation, no performance requirements.

**Patrol System:** One of three forms of troop government for Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors. The troop/group divides into small groups, with every patrol member playing a role in structuring affairs. This system allows for a representative democratic form of government that enables every girl to play an active role in the troop's affairs.
**Patrol:** A group of girls (usually 5-8) with a girl patrol leader. Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors divide into patrols when using the Patrol System form of troop government. Patrols may be organized by interest, with different patrols working toward different goals.

**Program Aides:** Girls in grades 7 – 12 who assist adults with events after completing the required Council training and hours of service.

**Promise Center:** A Girl Scout Daisy award in the form of the center of a daisy flower that means girls have completed exploring the Girl Scout Promise.

**Quiet Sign:** The traditional Girl Scout signal for silence in a group situation. Someone raises her or his open right hand. Each person who sees this sign stops talking, and raises her or his hand until everyone is quiet.

**Rededication:** A ceremony where girls and adults rededicate themselves to Girl Scouting by repeating the Girl Scout Promise, and reciting or reading the Girl Scout Law.

**Resident Camp:** A local Girl Scout Council-sponsored camp where girls attend for a week or more or stay overnight. They live in units and plan programs with a staff of trained counselors.

**Safety Activity Checkpoints:** Health and safety standards troops and individuals must follow.

**Series:** If you want to explore a specific theme or topic without making a long-term commitment, choose a Series. During a Series, you may meet two or more times to discover one theme or area of interest.

**Silver Award:** Unofficial, casual term used to refer to the Girl Scout Silver Award. This abbreviated term should not be used in written documents or official statements regarding this award.

**Sit-Up:** A lightweight, waterproof pad usually made of newspapers between two sheets of vinyl. Girl Scouts use them for sitting on damp ground, basement floors, etc.

**Slogan (The Girl Scout slogan):** "Do a good turn daily."

**SWAPS:** The tradition of Girl Scouts exchanging keepsakes, started long ago when Girl Scouts and Girl Guides first gathered for fun, songs, and making new friends. Originally, swaps were exchanged at national Girl Scout Senior Roundups and referred to as "Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere."

**Tagalong:** A non-registered child attending a Girl Scout event.

**Town Meeting System:** One of three forms of troop government for Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors. This system promotes a pure democracy that permits participation by the entire group. Useful when the troop is quite small.

**Trefoil:** The symbol identifying Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting around the world. The three parts of the trefoil stand for the three parts of the Promise.

**Troop Camping:** Camping over one night or longer, planned and carried out by the girls and leaders of one troop on a site operated or approved by the Council. Leaders must have completed Council Camping Skills learning sessions, online and face-to-face.

**Troop Committee:** Three to five adults who help as needed while girls and leaders plan and carry on troop program.
Troop File Audit: The Council troop files are audited (reviewed) each year in June to assure compliance with Council policy. Each troop leader (01) is responsible for assuring that the troop files are up-to-date.

Troop: A group of five or more registered Girl Scouts, led by two or more registered adult volunteers, supported by a troop committee.

Travel: Every girl deserves a chance to see the world. Girl Scouts offers many different travel opportunities so girls can see new places, meet new people, and learn about different cultures and ideas. Whether exploring their own neighborhoods, or flying to one of the four world centers, Girl Scouts are continually expanding their horizons. Travel presents girls with leadership opportunities to prepare, plan, money-earn, and engage in travel opportunities and Take Action projects.

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS): Begun in 1928, WAGGGS is an association of Girl Guide and Girl Scout national organizations around the world. Delegates from member organizations attend World Conferences.

World Centers: There are four World Centers. They are Our Chalet, Switzerland; Pax Lodge, England; Our Cabana, Mexico; and Sangam, India.

World Thinking Day, February 22: Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Scout Movement, and Olave Lady Baden-Powell, World Chief Guide of the Scout and Guide movement, were born on February 22. Girl Guides and Girl Scouts all over the world use the day to think of each other and exchange greetings, learn about other countries, and give to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund.

# Volunteer Orientation

Volunteer name _____________________________________ Orientation Facilitator _______________________

Position ____________ COM/TR # __________ Date ____________ Start Time ______ End Time ______

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Chapter 1 – Sharing Your Unique Gifts

Learning Opportunities

Chapter 2 – Girl Scouting as a National Experience

Journeys & Girls Guide to Girl Scouting

Chapter 3 – Engaging Girls at All Grade Levels

Creating a Safe Space for Girls

Chapter 4 – Being “Safety-Wise”

Insurance, Crisis Communication, Child Abuse Reporting

Incident/Accident

Chapter 5 – Managing Group Finances

Bank Account, Goal Setting, Cookie & Fall Product Program

Finance Reports, Money Earning

Appendix: Troop Volunteers

Your Role, Troop Committee, Sample Year, Reengaging Girls

Appendix: Travel Volunteers

Traveling w/Girls, Council Permission, Guidelines for Males

Review table, timelines, forms

Glossary

Page 115

Forms – Volunteer Application, Volunteer Appointment, Membership Registration, Health History, Begin/End of Year Paperwork, Equipment Checkout

Have completed sample copies to show – provide forms

Next Step – Registration for learning sessions, meeting with girls and adults

Volunteer Signature _______________________________ Date ____________

Orientation Facilitator Signature __________________________ Date ____________
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