Volunteer Essentials
2018-2019
Quick-Start Guide

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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, this Quick-Start Guide to Volunteer Essentials gives you the nitty-gritty—what you need to know now, as you plan for your first meeting with girls.

The rest of Volunteer Essentials is a reference for you to use only as needed. We know you are busy—thank you for choosing Girl Scouts! We are excited to be working with you to help girls find their inner G.I.R. L.!

When you have a question, simply look up the topic in the Table of Contents, and you’ll 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.

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Council (GSWRC)

Council Chair: Eileen O’Brien
Council CEO: Susan Douglas

Council Facts

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Council is one of 112 Girl Scout councils nationwide. We serve 66 Kentucky counties and 1 county in Ohio with regional offices around the council jurisdiction and the headquarters located in Lexington, Kentucky.

- Serves approximately 8,000 girl members
- Over 4,000 adult members
- Made up of 82 service units.
- The primary method of delivery of the Girl Scout program is the troop. Many girls also participate in Girl Scouts through a Girl Scout series, Girl Scout Events, camp and travel destinations.
- Annual budget of $3,416,700
- 24 Member Board of Director representing Central, Northern, Eastern, and South Eastern Kentucky.

Council Communication Information

Council Website: www.gskentucky.org
Council General Email contact: gswrc@gsrwc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/kygirlscouts?ref.hl
Twitter: http://twitter.com/kygirlscouts
Instagram: www.instagram.com/kygirlscouts/
Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/kyscouts
# Regional Service Centers and Offices

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<th>Headquarters</th>
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</table>
| London Service Center | London Girl Scout Service Center  
| 43 Waco Drive  
| London, KY 40741  
| 800-475-2621  
| **SHOP HOURS**  
| Closed 12-1 pm for lunch  
| Monday, Tuesday & Friday 9:30 am – 5:00 pm  
| Wednesday & Thursday by appointment only |
| Pikeville Office | Pikeville Girl Scout Office  
| 1-859-490-0464  
| **Open by appointment only** |
| Morehead Office | Morehead Girl Scout Office  
| 1-859-490-9407  
| **Open Thursdays only** |

**Council Shops**

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road maintains four regional council shops within each Girl Scout Service Center. Each shop sells Girl Scout uniforms, equipment, badges, patches, pins and other official Girl Scout insignia as well as other items for girls and volunteers. A rotating stock of new items is available throughout the year. Each Girl Scout shop maintains an inventory of the most popular Girl Scout catalog items. We can special order any items in the current Girl Scout catalog at any time.
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.” 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.
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.

- **2.3 million** girls 5 to 18 years of age
- **16,800** Girl Scouts overseas
- **888,000** adult volunteers
- **59 million** alumnae
- **112 councils** throughout the United States

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 With GSUSA

Connect with Girl Scouts of the USA at:

- [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)
- [www.facebook.com/GirlScoutsUSA](http://www.facebook.com/GirlScoutsUSA)
- [www.twitter.com/girlscouts](http://www.twitter.com/girlscouts)
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, both girls and adults, are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Each member also agrees to follow safety guidelines and pay the annual membership dues of $25. Adults have the option to purchase a lifetime membership for $400, or $200 for the New Young Alumnae discounted lifetime membership. The young alumnae discount is for anyone who was a registered Girl Scout member before the age of 18 and is under the age of 30 at the time of becoming a lifetime member.

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 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. GSUSA is a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). (Visit GSUSA online, where you’ll 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 Global Girl Scouting online 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 Structure-Girl Scouts of Kentucky's Wilderness Road

Girl Scout councils are chartered by the national office to attract and retain members in a geographic area, provide ways for girls to participate in Girl Scouting, create an environment that reflects Girl Scout values and ideals, manage volunteers’ experience with Girl Scouting, and keep girls and volunteers as safe as possible. The national office provides support materials to all councils to ensure that the Girl Scout experience is nationally consistent.

Your Support Team

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 called a service unit or another name. Never hesitate to contact them, because your support team will guide and assist you in all things Girl Scouting. If you have questions about the Girl Scout program, working with girls, resources in the National Program Portfolio (National Leadership Journeys and The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting), or selling Girl Scout cookies and other products, go to your team for answers and ongoing support. You can also contact your local office and ask for Troop Support! Find a full staff directory with a complete list of extensions and direct email links here: http://www.gskentucky.org/staffdirectory
Council Governance

Democratic Process

The democratic process has been part of the basic beliefs characterizing the Girl Scout Movement since its inception. Members of Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road are well informed about major issues affecting the council and elect the council’s Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the strategic direction and making final decisions for the organization.

Council

The purpose of the council is to further the development of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States; to establish local responsibility for leadership, administration and supervision of the Girl Scout Movement; and to develop, manage and maintain Girl Scouting in accordance with the terms of the council’s charter.

Council Membership and Responsibilities

The members of the council shall be all active adult volunteers and all active girl members 14 years of age and older who are registered in the Girl Scout Movement through the council. An active adult volunteer is a member of Girl Scouts of the USA who has been appointed or elected, including board members, to serve in a specific volunteer position.

The membership of the council shall consist of the following:

- Delegates elected by service units each fall at Service Unit Association Meetings
- Members of the Board of Directors
- Members of the Board Development Committee
- The Chair and Vice Chair of each cluster and the chair of the Service Unit Association

The voting members of the council shall:

- Elect the officers of the council, the Board of Directors, the members of the Board Development Committee and the delegates and alternates to the National Council of GSUSA
- Determine the general lines of direction for Girl Scouts locally, receiving and acting upon reports of the Board of Directors and by giving guidance to the Board.
- Amend the articles of incorporation and the by-laws
- Take all other action requiring membership vote
National Council Delegates

National delegates whom the council is entitled to elect to the National Council shall be elected for a term of three years or until their successors are elected. Alternates may be asked to fill possible vacancies among the National Delegates to the National Council and are elected at the same time and in the same manner as the National Delegates to the National Council.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is elected to ensure that the council continues to operate effectively over the long term. Specific responsibilities include policy-making, planning, review, funding, community relations and assuring that the CEO’s performance is effective. The board must ensure that the council is operated in compliance with Girl Scouts of the USA charter requirements and state and federal laws.

Giving Input to Governance and Operational Issues

Volunteers have the opportunity and responsibility to provide input within the council’s governance and operational system. Our democratic values hold that members should have a voice in influencing major decisions. Individuals should be well informed on the council’s mission, vision and goals in order to identify and/or discuss issues and needs that exist, and to be able to give sound input to the governance and operations of the council.

GOVERNANCE IS:

- Ensuring the mission and values of Girl Scouting
- Providing strategic direction and leadership in the council
- The care, custody and oversight of Girl Scouting within the council’s jurisdiction
- The responsibility of the Board of Directors

OPERATIONS IS:

- The day-to-day management/operations of the council
- Developing and implementing systems and processes to carry out the strategic direction as set by the board
- The responsibility of the CEO

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road governance process:

Provides a structure for communication between the membership and the board of directors to influence policy regarding the council goals, issues affecting girls and issues affecting the business of the organization thru SU Association Meeting, Spring Cluster Meetings and the Annual Meeting

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road operational process:

Provides a structure for communication between volunteers and paid staff to give input to the day-to-day operations of our council to provide girls with a leadership experience that achieves our mission and goals through surveys, committee work, and volunteer meetings.
Criteria for Communication of Issues

In a continuing effort to improve communication, the following criteria has been developed to be used by the membership in determining how to bring issues forward for discussion and/or action.

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<th>GOVERNANCE ISSUES</th>
<th>OPERATIONAL ISSUES</th>
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<td>A governance issue reflects the following criteria:</td>
<td>Operational issues focus on input, recommendations, or changes in an operating policy or procedure. This could include input on training curriculum, training policies, program opportunities, and camp maintenance or safety standards. Giving input on operational issues includes the following considerations:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• It impacts the Council Strategic Plan/Council Goals (for example, a request to strengthen the work on the goal that addresses girls’ understanding themselves and their values).</td>
<td>• <strong>What is the issue to be addressed?</strong> Why does it need to be addressed? What is the desired outcome? Will the issue affect the overall council – all girls? Is this a safety issue? Is it an issue that we have the authority to change?</td>
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<td>• It is a documented trend broadly affecting girls (for example, national and local data about increased bullying among girls)</td>
<td>• <strong>What methods will be used to provide input?</strong> Methods may include volunteer meetings, evaluations, surveys, email, letters, and phone calls.</td>
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<td>• It can be positive, negative or neutral</td>
<td>• <strong>Who can best respond to the issue?</strong> Should it go to the Service Unit Manager? A membership staff member?</td>
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<td>• It significantly affects the business of the organization (for example, merging with another council)</td>
<td>• <strong>Volunteer feedback and ideas on improving council processes is always welcome.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The board is the primary group responsible for identification of governance issues to be discussed. Such issues are generally related to the development of council finances and resources.</td>
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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 by doing, and learn cooperatively.

At the core of the GSLE are National 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 great Journey, all you need is enthusiasm and a sense of adventure. Before you dive in, try these four 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 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’ll 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, using the Volunteer Toolkit, 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, get 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.

GSUSA and GSWRC launched the Girl Scout Volunteer Toolkit which is a comprehensive digital tool accessible on your computer, smartphone and/or tablet that is the primary support resource for troop leaders. This means that we have a resource with a transformative
purpose – to save our volunteers time and frustration so you can spend less time navigating our many available resources as you plan, organize and manage your troop year with the girls and more time doing the things that you imagined when you volunteered: changing girls’ lives through amazing experiences!

Here are the many things you can do using the Volunteer Toolkit:

- Manage roster and contact information for girls and parents/guardians
- Know which volunteers in your troop have completed their registration and screening process
- Set up meeting logistics for upcoming meetings
- Pre-configured editable parent e-mails
- Full year view for meetings and activities
- Add/update activities and events
- Export calendar to integrate with your own calendar
- Review activity details – activities with steps, materials and time required
- Meeting aids, downloads and videos
- Track attendance, dues and forms
- Access aids (song lyrics, videos) during meeting
- Track your girls’ achievements and attendance
- Reference important safety guidelines for field trip planning
- Multiple level troop leaders can access the VTK too!

How do I get started?
Troop leaders should have already received an e-mail with login credentials for “My GS.” With these credentials, simply:

1. Click on the yellow "My GS" link located in the main site menu above.
2. Enter your username and password
3. Select “Volunteer Toolkit”
4. Lead your troop with these exciting new tools!

NOTE: Before you will be able to access the VTK you will have to be registered, complete your background check and if a new troop leader, complete ‘Welcome to Girl Scouts’. 
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 your council’s resources or search the Internet for “icebreakers 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 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. Remind the girls they can do activities inside or outside. 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 that 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?
Using 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 your council’s website and on the Volunteer Toolkit; your council may also provide them in some additional electronic or printed form.

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 the activities, rather than hearing all that from you.
- **Girls learn by doing.** If research or special equipment is needed, they’ll learn better by 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 volunteer 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’ volunteer-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls. (Councils may also establish maximums due to size or cost restrictions.) These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls—for example, if one volunteer has to respond to an emergency, a second volunteer 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</td>
<td>One additional</td>
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<td></td>
<td>volunteers (at</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Daisies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-6</td>
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<td>(grades K–1)</td>
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<td>Girl Scout Brownies</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>(grades 2–3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>(grades 4–5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>(grades 6–8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Seniors</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>(grades 9–10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Ambassadors</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(grades 11–12)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Here are some examples: If you’re meeting with 17 Daisies, you’ll need three volunteers, at least two of whom are unrelated (in other words, not your sister, spouse, significant other, 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 volunteers for 12 Daisies and one more volunteer for up to six more girls. You have 17, so you need three volunteers. If, however, you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting, you need only two unrelated volunteers, at least one of which is female (because, on the chart, two volunteers can manage up to 25 Cadettes).

In addition to the volunteer-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.

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 on GSWRC website. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls before engaging in activities with girls.

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 (or the age of majority defined by the state, if it is older than 18), must have completed the adult screening process and have taken the appropriate adult learning courses before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female. In addition, GSWRC expects volunteers to be fully capable of performing their duties. Volunteers are not permitted to use or be under the influence of any substance which may impair their physical and/or mental skills at any time when they are supervising girls as part of the girl/adult ratio, this includes alcohol or prescription medications, medical marijuana or illegal drugs.

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. Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused or neglected is to report that information to the local children’s services agency.

5. **Be prepared for emergencies.** Work with girls and other volunteers to establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/volunteers, 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 and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone (girl or adult) is in a legal seat and wears her/his 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. Firearms are forbidden on all council properties and during any Girl Scout events/programs.

9. **Create an emotionally safe space.** Adults and volunteers 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.

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, 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 websites, publish girls’ first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge and have them commit to it.

12. **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 that are not Girl Scout–approved product sales 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’ll 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’ll serve as a partner and role model to girls. You’ll also work closely with a co-volunteer, because two volunteers 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 an adult female who is not related to the other volunteer 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 volunteer-to-girl ratios chapter 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:

- 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’ll 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 group
- Overseeing with honesty, integrity, and careful record-keeping the funds that girls raise
- Maintaining a close connection to your volunteer support team
- 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’ll team up with co-volunteers, 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 volunteers with special skills to facilitate a specialized meeting
- Assisting with trips and chaperoning
- Building girls outdoor skills and experiences
- Managing group records

If you have a large support team, the first thing you’ll 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.

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

Remember to call on your volunteer support team to assist you with opening a bank account, planning your first meeting, and so on. Also plan to attend support meetings—usually held several times throughout the year—that provide excellent opportunities to learn from other volunteers.
Volunteer Placement

The adult volunteer is an integral piece of the Girl Scout Movement. Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road strives to provide a volunteer structure supported by clear, consistent policies and procedures so that all adults have a fair and equitable opportunity to volunteer with the organization and are provided with the skills and knowledge necessary to have a positive leadership experience.

Equal Opportunity Volunteer Policy

Each volunteer position has defined eligibility criteria that must be met for volunteer appointments to occur. Eligibility criteria includes the ability to perform the responsibilities of the position, willingness to complete any required learning or training and commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law. As well as compliance with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road and GSUSA volunteer policies including volunteer screening and placement procedures as outlined below.

There shall be no discrimination against a volunteer that meets eligibility criteria of a volunteer role by reason of disability, age, race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, national origin, religion, citizenship, ancestry, marital status, socioeconomic status or other characteristics protected by federal, state, or local law.

Volunteer Recruitment

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road makes every effort to ensure that the community is provided with information and a variety of activities that help move all potential volunteers from awareness to understanding of Girl Scouts, resulting in involvement in some way with the Girl Scout Movement. Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road focuses on recruiting and renewing membership that is reflective of the diversity of the community it serves.

Volunteer Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening</th>
<th>All appointed volunteers including those working directly or indirectly with girls must meet the following requirements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road is committed to providing a safe and quality program for girls in the community. The components of the volunteer screening process ensure that any risk to the quality of the program or the safety of the girls is managed accordingly.</td>
<td>- Commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law and agreement to follow volunteer policies and procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Successful completion of a criminal background check with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road’s approved vendor.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


## Selection
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road has resources and a system of support to help adult volunteers select and register in the most appropriate role.

| Adult volunteers are asked to register in the volunteer position that is most appropriate for the role they play in the troop or group and must agree to complete the requirements of that position accordingly. |
| Registration must be current based on the Girl Scouts of USA membership year which runs from October 1 – September 30. |

## Appointment
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road reserves the right to appoint adult volunteers based on identified eligibility criteria and compliance with volunteer policies and procedures.

| Appointment is contingent upon the successful completion of the screening and selection processes and is for a term of one year unless otherwise stated in the volunteer position description. |
| Appointment is subject to termination if eligibility criteria is not met or the volunteer fails to follow volunteer policy and procedure. |
| Appointment is signified by a signed position description that volunteers can keep for their records. |

## Criminal Background Check
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road requires that all appointed volunteers who work directly with girls, will be driving girls, hold a leadership position in the service unit and/or handle money successfully complete a criminal background check every four years for the length of volunteer involvement with the organization. Background checks must be completed with the approved vendor via an email invitation received upon purchase of membership registration or renewal.

| What you should know about the criminal background check | Only a volunteer’s criminal history is checked and reported (arrest records and criminal charges). |
| It is a standard operating procedure of criminal background check vendors to utilize consumer credit agencies to obtain an individual’s seven year address history but a volunteer’s personal credit history IS NOT checked or reported. |
| Results of the volunteer screening process are only communicated to volunteers and council staff as needed to ensure the safety and well-being of the girls. Only eligibility status is communicated unless an adult’s criminal history presents a clear and present danger to the girls (i.e. registered sexual offender.). |
Details of a volunteer’s criminal history are kept confidential outside a small staff team that reviews background check reports as part of the volunteer screening process.

Renewal of background checks occur in conjunction with membership renewal. If a volunteer’s background check is set to expire anytime the following membership year, they will receive an email invitation to renew their background check upon purchase of membership renewal.

Possible Outcomes of Adult Screening Process

At the time of the adult screening, volunteers will be either eligible to serve as Girl Scout volunteers, restricted from certain activities or disqualified from serving in any volunteer position. An example of restriction would be a volunteer not being allowed to handle money. If a volunteer’s screening reveals issues relating to handling money she/he may be eligible to volunteer but not in position in which you must handle money.

Any Girl Scout volunteer/parent participant who is formally accused of, charged with, or under investigation by authorities for any automatically disqualifying offense (or offenses which might result in disqualification at the discretion of GSWRC), will not be allowed to volunteer until disposition of the charge. The following procedures will be followed:

- Suspend all Girl Scout activities and duties until the matter has been resolved.
- Including but limited to, turning over all monies, materials, and records to a designated representative of the council until the matter is resolved.
- The accused is considered innocent until proven guilty

Troop Formation

Troops can meet once a week, once a month, or twice a month—the frequency 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. GSWRC does not recommend meeting in leader’s homes however.

As a troop leader who has completed the background screening and is approved to volunteer, here are six steps to get your troop started:

1. Set up a ‘parent meeting’ and invite all the girls’ parents/guardians. A minimum of five girls is needed to start a troop. All troops begin with twelve spaces.
2. Determine the time, location and schedule of your troop meetings.
3. Guide parents and girls to register online while at the meeting if possible. Have adults complete a Girl Health History Form. (Forms on council website). This meeting is a great opportunity to recruit your ‘Troop Committee” - a group of parents who agree to help you run the troop. Ensure that all families are asked to get involved. Here is a list of volunteer positions that can ensure the girls have the best troop experience:
   a. **Troop Treasurer** – this dependable person helps open and manage the troop checking account and is key to the financial integrity of the troop. This position
requires membership registration, background screening and some training, particularly when managing product sale money. All troops must have a Girl Scout bank account.

b. **Troop Cookie Manager**– this seasonal position guides the next generation of financially savvy business leaders and helps girls set and achieve goals through the Cookie Program. This position requires membership registration, background screening and training for the Cookie Program which is coordinated by the Product Sales Department.

c. **Troop Fall Product Sales Manager** – this adult provides girl program and money earning for troops as they start the fall by managing this sale. This position requires membership registration, background screening and training which is coordinated by the Product Sales Department.

d. **Troop First Aider** - A volunteer with current certification in First Aid/CPR can support the troop as a First Aider. Council-sponsored training is available or may be taken through another organization. This position requires membership registration, background screening and current certification.

e. **Troop Camp Adult** – This person supports the troop in outdoor adventure by taking the outdoor education courses that certify them to lead girls on a day or overnight outdoor/camping experience. This position requires membership registration, background screening and a one-time training to qualify.

Additional ‘Friends and Family’ roles that troops will need:

- **Snack parent**: Especially with younger troops, parents help bring nutritious snacks to troop meeting. You may rotate this so each parent takes a turn during the year or one parent can offer to schedule snacks for the year.

- **Service Project/Field Trip Coordinator**: Volunteer(s) assists with planning girl chosen field trips and service projects and offer ideas for troop consideration, assists with permission slips, arranging drivers, and ensuring council guidelines are followed.

- **Service Unit Meeting Representative**: This person is a connector, a gatherer of information that other parents and leaders will need. They attend the monthly Service Unit Meetings and report back on upcoming events and opportunities.

- **Troop Celebration Coordinator**: At least one volunteer will work with girls to plan ceremonies and celebrations for the troop.

**Your Service Unit Support Team**

Every troop is part of a service unit. This team assists troop leaders in getting started, placing girls, providing day-to-day support and ensuring that safety guidelines are followed. Each member of the service unit team will need to be registered and have a background screening. The service unit volunteers listed below help troop leaders with the following:

- **Service Unit Manager**:
  - Convenes a monthly service unit meeting that troop representatives attend.
  - Appoints and oversees troop leaders and other volunteers in the service unit
- Approves outside money earning activities
- Approves meeting time trips and day trips
- Answers questions and provides support
- Can help you with a parent problem and provide mediation

**Troop Organizer:**
- Recruits parents and girls from their assigned school, community or house of worship
- Helps connect each girl with a troop
- Can suggest or help arrange a meeting location
- Can assist with a parent meeting
- Can assist with finding a Troop Mentor or Sister Troop

**Service Unit Treasurer:**
- Assists in setting up new troop checking accounts
- Is a signer on every troop account in the service unit
- Does a troop account ‘audit’
- Can train troop treasurers

**Welcome Coach:**
- Conducts the ‘Welcome to Girl Scouts’ sessions
- Connects volunteers to the service team
- Provides a roster of service unit team members who will support the troop
- Listens to concerns and offers suggestions and resources to get started

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**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 is a specific learning path for each volunteer role, which may consist of a combination of online and/or in-person courses designed to acquaint you with Girl Scouting basics, provide resources for you to be more effective in your role and help you feel prepared.

**Registration for In-Person Volunteer Learning Sessions**

All training sessions are listed on the council website TAP calendar under ‘events’; organized by months so you can scroll down to find the session that best fits your needs. It is important that you register in sufficient time to allow for facilitators/trainers to prepare materials for the session.
You can use one of two methods for registering for a learning session.

Online Registration (preferred method – fastest and most secure)

Search available in-person course offerings at the council website under ‘events’ at (www.gskentucky.org). Most of our courses do not have an associated cost but some do, i.e. CPR/First Aid, Troop Camp Training. You will need to pay for those courses with a credit card at the time you register.

Mail

Some sessions will request that you register by mail, especially when they are being offered by other agencies or volunteers. But you may register for any courses by mail if you prefer. Follow the process indicated in the course description.

Troop Leadership Courses

Orientation to Kentucky’s Wilderness Road: This short session gives the new volunteer an overview of the council and resources available to the volunteer.

Welcome to Girl Scouts: This session should be taken prior to meeting with your troop the first time. This in-person meeting is approximately 2 hours and is an informational session to help new leaders gain more in depth knowledge on starting and working with a troop. Troops are required to have two adults leading so both adults should take this session.

Girl Scouts 101: This is a self-paced online training available in both English and Spanish. The session includes information about resources available to volunteers, basic safety requirements and an overview of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls. This course is required for all volunteers and takes about 45 minutes.

Troop Essentials: This session is grade level specific (Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette) and is designed to provide specific information about troop management.

Planning Trips: Completing this course is required before leaving the troop meeting location for meeting, day or overnight trips.

Trained Troop Requirements

CPR/First Aid: It is strongly suggested that a troop should be accompanied by someone currently certified in CPR/First Aid for any activity that is held outside the regular meeting location and required for those activities that are physically demanding, high adventure, or overnight. It is also required by Safety Activity Checkpoints for some activities. A Girl Scout First Aider is an adult (18 years or older) who has taken an in-person CPR/First Aid training from an accredited organization. Check Chapter 4, Safety Wise for more details. Courses are offered by the council.
Outdoor Education: Outdoor education courses are required by Kentucky’s Wilderness Road for volunteers taking troops/groups to day camp programs and overnight camping. The purpose of these courses is to help the volunteer develop the skills and knowledge to provide a safe outdoor experience. Here are the two required courses:

- **Out & About**: This course focuses on safety, usage of council camps and outdoor programs and is ideal for volunteers leading very young girls like Daisies. This session certifies volunteers to use the modern facilities (bathroom and cooking facilities) at council camps for an overnight experience. You will **not** be certified for outdoor cooking. This is not a pre-requisite for Troop Camp Certification. This session requires that you complete three online courses and a 2-hour classroom session.

- **Troop Camp Certification**: This course prepares volunteers to take troops/groups camping in either tents or cabins. This is a blended learning course so participants will need to complete three online sessions prior to attending an overnight at camp where participants will have hands on experiences with outdoor skills such as outdoor cooking, fire building, sanitation, camp equipment and safety.
  - A Troop Camp Certification competency by-pass exam is available for those volunteers who have had troop camp training in another Girl Scout council or equivalent organization and have had camping experience with groups. To request this exam, contact the Volunteer Development Director.

**Fall Product and Girl Scout Cookie Programs:**

These programs require special instruction for ensuring a successful troop experience. One registered adult member must complete these sessions for the troop to participate in the program. These sessions are offered at the monthly Service Unit Meeting, online and one-on-one by request. These sessions are required annually to keep up with the changes in these products.

**Additional Learning Opportunities:**

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road believes in the benefit of ongoing training for our volunteers. WE know that you want to learn more, discuss topics with others, get your questions answered and discover new ideas for working with girls. We offer enrichment sessions to learn more about topics such as ceremonies, conflict management, healthy living, Journeys and many more. Check the online training calendar for sessions near to you.

**Service Team Position Training**

Girl Scouts volunteers serving in Service Team positions are offered training in a blended learning style; an orientation online, followed by a personal classroom session. Classroom sessions for Service Team training are scheduled July and August of each year. Check the council website for details.
GSUSA and GSWRC launched the Girl Scout Volunteer Toolkit which is a comprehensive digital tool accessible on your computer, smartphone and/or tablet that is the primary support resource for troop leaders. This means that we have a resource with a transformative purpose – to save our volunteers time and frustration so you can spend less time navigating our many available resources as you plan, organize and manage your troop year with the girls and more time doing the things that you imagined when you volunteered: changing girls’ lives through amazing experiences!

Here are the many things you can do using the Volunteer Toolkit:
- Manage roster and contact information for girls and parents/guardians
- Know which volunteers in your troop have completed their registration and screening process
- Set up meeting logistics for upcoming meetings
- Pre-configured editable parent e-mails
- Full year view for meetings and activities
- Add/update activities and events
- Export calendar to integrate with your own calendar
- Review activity details – activities with steps, materials and time required
- Meeting aids, downloads and videos
- Track attendance, dues and forms
- Access aids (song lyrics, videos) during meeting
- Track your girls’ achievements and attendance
- Reference important safety guidelines for field trip planning
- Multiple level troop leaders can access the VTK too!

How do I get started?
Troop leaders should have already received an e-mail with login credentials for “My GS.” With these credentials, simply:

1. Click on the yellow "My GS" link located in the main site menu above.
2. Enter your username and password
3. Select “Volunteer Toolkit”
4. Lead your troop with these exciting new tools!

NOTE: Before you will be able to access the VTK you will have to be registered, complete your background check and if a new troop leader, complete ‘Welcome to Girl Scouts’.

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.

Just as you’ll receive support throughout your volunteering experience, when you reach the end of the term you signed up for, you’ll 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 to 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 council 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 takes place during the weekend in autumn that we set our clocks back.

During Volunteer Appreciation month each service center will host a special Volunteer Appreciation Event! These events could be family open house, ice cream socials, or anything else! Always check your Cluster Newsletter (Tidbit Tuesday) or call your local service center in April to discover how we plan to say Thank You!
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.

**Girl Scouts Take Action to Change the World**

Girls of all ages can make the world a better place. Watch the videos below to see Girl Scouts in action!

- **Troop Inspires a School to Save Water**
- **Where the Sidewalk Ends**
- **Juniors Help Historic Building Save Energy**

In other words: **Discover + Connect + Take Action = Leadership**. And everything you do with girls in Girl Scouting is aimed at giving them the benefits of these three “keys” to Leadership.

**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. 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

Top Reasons Why Girls Should Get Outdoors
Findings from the 2014 More than Smores 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

Start the fun now!
girlscouts.org/join

*More Than Smores, a 2014 study by the Girl Scout Research Institute, talked to nearly 3,000 Girl Scouts in fourth-through-eighth-grade.
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.
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.
What Daisies Do

Choose a Journey

Use The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

*Remember to add initials, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more, then share all of them in the books.
What Brownies Do

Choose a Journey and earn the awards

Want to earn more Badges? Add the Badge sets

Use them all with The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more. See ideas in all the girl’s books.
What Juniors Do

Choose a Journey and earn the awards

Agent of Change
- Digital Photographer
- Staying Fit
- Musician
- Entertainment Technology
- Science

GET MOVING!
- Gardener
- Detective
- Camper
- Independence

aMUSE
- Geocacher
- Animal Habitats

Want to earn more Badges? Add the Badge sets

Want to earn more Badges? Add the Badge sets

- Playing the Past
- Product Designer
- Social Butterfly

Use them all with The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

- Cookie Business
- Cookie CEO
- Savvy Shopper

Remember to add triple outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more Badges in all the girls books.
What Cadettes Do

Choose a Journey and earn the awards

Want to earn more Badges? Add the Badge sets

Use them all with The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

*Remember to add more outdoor adventures, the more the better! See ideas in the Girl’s Guide.*
Choose a Journey and earn the awards

Want to earn more Badges? Add the Badge sets

Use them all with The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

*Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the social side and more! Two ideas is all that girls lack.
What Ambassadors Do

Choose a Journey

Use The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting

Financial Literacy

- On My Own
- Good Credit

Cookie Business

- Research & Development
- Development
- P&L

*Remember to add more, outdoor adventures, the
nationwide expansion and new ideas in other girl’s ideas.
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 your council’s Girl Scout shop or by visiting the [GSUSA online shop](https://www.girlscouts.org/). 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, and community networking and leadership. They also engage girls in building networks that not only support them 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 GSLE. 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), and [https://www.girlscouts.org/gogoldonline/](https://www.girlscouts.org/gogoldonline/)

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. For more information, please reference the Girl Scouts of the USA website at [http://www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/scholarships.html](http://www.girlscouts.org/en/our-program/scholarships.html). 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. Check out some of the award projects girls in your council are doing and talk to a few past recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award. You’ll 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 on the awards and guidelines for you to use when helping girls earn their awards are also available online.

## 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 GSLE. 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 contacting your council or by visiting [www.girlscouts.org/program/basics](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics) and clicking on “Program Basics” on the left side of the screen. Note that councils may offer different experiences, based on availability of resources and partners in your area.

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road has many program opportunities. Find these opportunities on our online Training and Program Calendar: [http://www.gskentucky.org/en/events-and-activities/event-calendar.html](http://www.gskentucky.org/en/events-and-activities/event-calendar.html)


### 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 Girl Scout 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, and so on—are sewn right into the Journeys, including ideas for new ceremonies girls can create.

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

- **Bridging** ceremonies mark a girl’s move from one grade 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 honor 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 the Girl Scout Promise and Law) using the spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other methods of expression. It is never a religious ceremony.

Highest Awards Ceremony Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road honors all of our Girl Scouts who have earned the Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards at an annual awards ceremony where they are recognized.

Investiture welcomes new members, girls or volunteers, 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 volunteers to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

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, 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 other Girl Scouts and Girl Guides.

### Girl Scout Handshake

The handshake is a more formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts, and is an 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 of music. 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/](http://gsuniversity.girlscouts.org/resource/song-leading-workshops/). A variety of songbooks are also available for purchase. Check out your council shop or visit the [GSUSA online shop](http://gsuniversity.girlscouts.org/resource/song-leading-workshops/).
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, your co-volunteers, parents, and girls: it may just be one time for this particular group of girls. Or, if you meet regularly, what day and time work best for the girls, for you, for your co-volunteers, and for other adults who will be presenting or mentoring? Once per week, twice a month, 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.

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 for the 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 or a safe outdoor space for activities.
- **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 ______.”
Please Note: Meeting in the home is strongly discouraged. You should be aware that the council is unable to provide liability insurance on an individual’s home and therefore the liability will rest with the volunteer. However, if you still choose to meet in the home, you MUST abide by the following policies:

- All pets must be secured while girls are in the home
- All adults in the home over the age of 18 must be registered members and complete a background check
- If any adult living in the home is a convicted sex offender meetings are NOT PERMITTED in the home
- No smoking or use of tobacco and/or alcohol is permitted while girls are in the home
- All firearms must be secured in a locked gun locker while girls are in the home
- Care must be taken to insure that girls with allergies will not be exposed to any known allergens while inside the home.
- In case of fire or emergency, two exits must be accessible at all times

**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’ll also find these listed in the adult guide of each Leadership Journey. Plus, the 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)
### Girl Scout Daisies

**At the Girl Scout Daisy level (kindergarten and first grade), girls . . .**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>This means . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have loads of energy and need to run, walk, and play outside.</td>
<td>They'll enjoy going on nature walks and outdoor scavenger hunts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are only beginning to learn about basic number concepts, time, and money.</td>
<td>You'll want to take opportunities to count out supplies together—and, perhaps, the legs on a caterpillar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Girl Scout Brownies

**At the Girl Scout Brownie level (second and third grade), girls . . .**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>This means . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have lots of energy and need to run, walk, and play outside.</td>
<td>Taking your session activities outside whenever possible.</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<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 to listen and follow again!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Girl Scout Juniors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At the Girl Scout Junior level (fourth and fifth grades), girls . . .</th>
<th>This means . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Want to make decisions and express their opinions.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are social and enjoy doing things in groups.</td>
<td>Allowing girls to team-up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are aware of expectations and sensitive to the judgments of others.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are concerned about equity and fairness.</td>
<td>Not shying away from discussing why rules are in place, and having girls develop their own rules for their group.</td>
</tr>
<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>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have strong fine and gross motor skills and coordination.</td>
<td>Engaging girls in moving their minds and their bodies. Allow girls to express themselves through written word, choreography, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love to act in plays, create music, and dance.</td>
<td>Girls might like to tell a story through playwriting, playing an instrument, or choreographing a dance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be starting puberty, which means beginning breast development, skin changes, and weight changes. Some may be getting their periods.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Girl Scout Cadettes**

**At the Girl Scout Cadette level (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades), girls . . .**

| This means . . . |
| 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. |
| 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. |
| 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. |
| 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. |
Can be very self-conscious—wanting to be like everyone else, but fearing they are unique in their thoughts and feelings.

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.

Are beginning to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home.

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.

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### Girl Scout Seniors

**At the Girl Scout Senior level (ninth and tenth grades), girls . . .**

**This means . . .**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>This Means . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have strong problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and are able to plan and reflect on their own learning experiences.</td>
<td>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 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’ll 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>
</tbody>
</table>
Feel they have lots of responsibilities and pressures—from home, school, peers, work, and so on. 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.

Are continuing to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home. 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girl Scout Ambassadors</th>
<th>At the Girl Scout Ambassador level (eleventh and twelfth grades), girls . . .</th>
<th>This means . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
<td></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>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>
</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>Girls will enjoy teaming up in small or large groups for art projects, performances, and written activities. They’ll also want to tackle relationship issues through 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>
<td></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>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Feel they have lots of responsibilities and pressures—from home, school, peers, work, etc.

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.

Are continuing to navigate their increasing independence and expectations from adults—at school and at home—and are looking to their futures.

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.

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 be part of. The following sections share some 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 volunteers.

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 ways 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, and when handled constructively can actually enhance communication and relationships. At the very least, Girl Scouts are expected to practice self-control and diplomacy so that conflicts do 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 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 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 volunteers. 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 (no "you shoulds") 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’ll 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 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 a 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 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 on 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 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 volunteer 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 of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road require that parents/guardians 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. **All programs regarding sensitive topics must receive prior approval from the Council Program Department.**

**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 Kentucky’s Wilderness Road will guide you in addressing these concerns. If feasible, you may also share your concern with the girl’s family and Kentucky’s Wilderness Road.

**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. And 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](http://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 councils, 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>
</tbody>
</table>
Shifts parental responsibilities to you and is so busy with her own life that she allows no time to help,

“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.”

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 (if girls will attend the meeting too).
- Practiced a discussion on the following: Girl Scout Mission Experience.
- Determined when product sales (including Girl Scout cookie activities) will happen in your council; parents/guardians will absolutely want to know.
- Determined what information parents should bring to the meeting.
- Used the Friends and Family pages provided in the volunteer guides for many of the Journeys, or created your own one-page information sheet (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 Journey resources—books, awards, and keepsakes—and other merchandise like sashes, vests, T-shirts, and so on)
- Gathered or created supplies, including a sign-in sheet, an information sheet, permission forms for parents/guardians (also available from your council), health history forms (as required by your council), and GSUSA registration forms.
- Prepared yourself to ask parents and guardians for help 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. Membership dues 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 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. 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 structure 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. If your council uses paper registration forms, you can pass them out at this time. Check with your council for its specific registration guidelines. You may also want to email or hand out a brief information sheet before or at this meeting.
- 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’ll 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 and girls might choose to do
  - That a parent/guardian permission form is used for activities outside the group’s normal meeting it is
  - How you plan to keep in touch with parents/guardians (a Facebook page or group, Twitter, email, 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 GSLE is and what the program does for their daughters
  - When Girl Scout cookies and (and other products) will go on sale and how participation in product sales teaches life skills and helps fund group activities
  - The cost of membership, which includes annual GSUSA dues, any group payments (ask your council), 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 other product sales generate funds for the group treasury
  - That families can also make donations to the council—and why they might want to do that!
  - That you may be looking for additional volunteers, and in which areas you are looking (be as specific as possible!)
- If your council doesn’t offer online registration and you've distributed paper registration forms, collect them.
- Remind the group of the next meeting (if you’ll have one) and thank everyone for attending. Hold the next 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 Facebook, Twitter, text messages, 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 Girls 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 the 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.”

Registering Girls with Cognitive Disabilities

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.

In this chapter you will learn what you need to know about Girl Scout safety guidelines. You, the parents/guardians of the girls in your troop and the girls themselves share the responsibility for staying safe. Ensuring the health and safety of girls in Girl Scouting is a cornerstone of the Girl Scout Movement. This includes developing safety consciousness in both girls and adults, as well as training staff, volunteers, and girls to ensure proper supervision, planning to prevent accidents and incidents, and maintenance of program resources. Everyone bears responsibility for safety: the council, the group leadership, the parents/guardians of the girls and the girls themselves. The point of all safety resources produced by Girl Scouts of the USA and GSWRC is to establish a sound program experience that will protect and maintain the well-being of every Girl Scouts, and protect the legal interests of the adults.

How are safety guidelines set?

Restrictions of Girl Scout activities are generally set by GSUSA in partnership with our insurance company. Activities that are not allowed by GSWRC are the activities which are not covered under Girl Scout insurance. These activities are deemed by the insurance company to carry an inherent level of risk that they are not willing to assume.

Activities that require additional permission from the council are those that have additional laws, certifications or guidelines which must be followed in order to be covered by our insurance. The Program Department will assist you in meeting those guidelines.
Why so many forms?

Nearly every form is designed to do at least one of two things:

- To act as a checklist to inform you of certain legal or procedural requirements so you don’t have to memorize them.
- Communicate needed information to the service unit or council. Often, this information is needed to support you, (i.e. legal or insurance information) so that you don’t have to think about it again – submit the form and your part is done!

All forms can be found at www.gskentucky.org/forms

In addition to fun and friendship, girls are looking for adventure when they join Girl Scouts! These adventures provide them with unique opportunities to try new things, improve skills, overcome fears, and help other girls. Nothing is more important than ensuring the health and safety of girls when they are engaging in these fun adventures. At Girl Scouts, we work hard to build safety consciousness in adults, training staff, volunteers, and girls on all safety protocols so that we can ensure proper supervision, prevent accidents and incidents, and maintain program resources.

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), must...
have completed the adult screening process and have taken the appropriate adult learning courses before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female. In addition, GSWRC expects volunteers to be fully capable of performing their duties. Volunteers are not permitted to use or be under the influence of any substance, which may impair their physical and/or mental skills at any time when they are supervising girls as part of the girl/adult ratio; this includes alcohol or prescription medications, medical marijuana or illegal drugs.

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 adult volunteers 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 activity-specific 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. Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused or neglected is to report that information to the local children’s services agency.

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, age 21 or over and have a good driving record, a valid license and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone (girl or adult) is in a legal seat and wears her/his 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/guardian-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the
same sleeping quarters in program areas. When parents/guardians 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. Firearms are forbidden on all council properties and during any Girl Scout events/programs.

7. **Create an emotionally safe space.** Volunteers 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 conversations 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.

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

- Bubble Soccer
- Bungee Jumping
- Flying in small private planes, helicopters or blimps
- Hang gliding
- Hot air ballooning, both untethered and tethered
- Hunting
- Motorbiking
- Paintball Tagging
- Parachuting/Skydiving
- Parasailing
- Riding all-terrain vehicles (ATV’s)
- Riding motorized personal watercraft such as jet skis
- Skydiving
- Stunt skiing
- Outdoor trampolines
- Zorbing
Responsibilities of Parents and 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. This can include such activities as: product sales, including Digital Cookie; overnight travel; the use of special equipment; or 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 a parent or guardian will drop off or pick up their 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.
- Understand what appropriate behavior is for 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.

Behavior Management Guidelines

The Girl Scout philosophy of behavior management builds on a child’s need to develop a sense of self-worth. In order to promote this, the program has been carefully planned to foster positive behavior.

To accomplish this please ensure that:

- Children are involved in rule setting and help determine the consequences of misbehavior.
- Whenever possible, the site and activities are set up to promote positive interaction among children.
- Volunteer encourage children to learn how to solve problems and settle differences among themselves.
- All disciplinary efforts are based on this philosophy. When a child’s behavior creates a risk for the emotional or physical health and safety of another child or a volunteer, the following procedures shall be followed:
  - The child is separated from the problem activity or situation
  - A volunteer listens to the child and discusses the consequences of further misbehavior
Repeated misbehavior will be handled by a telephone conversation or conference with the child's parents/guardians.

The parent, child and a volunteer agree to a plan that will improve behavior or face the possibility of termination from the program.

Girl Scouts of Kentucky's Wilderness Road will assist in the proper handling of behavior management if it cannot be resolved through the actions taken above. It is our goal to ensure all girls have the opportunity to participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

### Guidelines for Adult-Girl Interactions

#### Physical Guidelines

- When touching a child for any reason, ensure that another adult is in clear view.
- Under no circumstances may an adult hit a child.
- When touching children, contact should generally be limited to the hand, shoulder, or upper back. Children should never be touched in a place normally covered by a bathing suit, unless for a clear medical necessity, and then only in the presence of another adult.
- A hug should be given only in response to a request by a child or after asking permission (For example, “You look like you could use a hug. Would you like one?”)
- An adult should never touch a child against her will, unless in the case of clear and present danger to the child. An adult should never touch a child against her discomfort, whether verbally or non-verbally.
- The physical right to privacy of a child should be respected to the greatest extent possible, especially in activities and situations such as sleeping, changing of clothes, showering/bathing and other bathroom activities.

#### Verbal Guidelines

Adults may not use abusive or derogatory language with a child. Adults should exercise good judgment in choosing the topics and language used with children. Under no circumstance, should the romantic/sexual life of an adult be shared with children. When an activity is planned on a topic of a sensitive or controversial nature, parents and the council staff are informed and written permission is received before proceeding. Adult volunteers may only communicate electronically with a Girl Scout once parental/guardian permission has been obtained.

### Girl Release to Authorized Person

Girl Scout leaders and their designees shall release girls only to persons authorized by the parent or guardian. The troop leader or co-leader will maintain the Girl Scout release information and will update information annually.

### Possession of Fire Arms or Weapons

No person will use or possess firearms on council-owned or operated properties (including vehicles) while involved in Girl Scout related activities, except law enforcement officers acting in an official capacity.
Although the Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road respects individual’s right to carry a concealed weapon pursuant to Kentucky/Ohio’s Carry and Conceal Law, it is the policy of the council that no member, participant, guest or any other individual shall have the right to carry, conceal, or possess any gun, knife, or any other kind of weaponry while involved in or present at any Girl Scout activity or while on Girl Scout Council owned property.
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 volunteers 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></th>
<th>Group Meetings</th>
<th></th>
<th>Events, Travel, and Camping</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two unrelated</td>
<td>One additional</td>
<td>Two unrelated</td>
<td>One additional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for every:</td>
<td>volunteers to each additional:</td>
<td>volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:</td>
<td>volunteers to each additional:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Daisies (grades K–1)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2–3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4–5)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6–8)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9–10)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11–12)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1-15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some examples on utilizing the chart: If you’re meeting with 17 Daisies, you’ll need three volunteers, 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. This is determined as follows: for up to 12 Daisies you need two volunteers, and one more volunteer for up to six additional girls. Since you have 17 girls, you need three volunteers (2+1). If, however, you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting you need only two unrelated volunteers, at least one of whom is female, since the chart shows that two volunteers can manage up to 25 Cadettes.

In addition to the volunteer-to-girl ratios, please remember that adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old, or the age of majority defined by your state if it is older than 18.

**NOTE:** For mixed grade level troops, use the ratio for the lowest grade level in the troop. For example, if the troop consists of Daisies and Brownies, the Daisy ratio should be followed.

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

**Safety Responsibilities and Role of the Male Leader in Girl Scouts**

The Beliefs and Principles of the Girl Scout Movement in the USA state that adult members of the Girl Scout Movement serve as role models to girls in inspiring them to these high ideals. Female and male leaders/advisors show girls how they become happy and resourceful citizens. Girls need both female and male role models to be truly well rounded. GSWRC strongly encourages men to accept leadership roles within the Girl Scout Movement.

Safety has always been a primary concern for Girl Scouts. To avoid even the appearance of impropriety and for the protection of leaders/advisors as well as the girls, it is Kentucky’s Wilderness Road’s practice that at all Girl Scout sponsored activities there will be at least two adults, one of whom must be a female registered as a Girl Scout adult volunteer.

For male participation during overnight events, follow these guidelines:

- Men will have a separate, designated sleeping area, which can be a separate tent or room where girls will not need access
- Men will have separate, designated bathroom facilities or designated bathroom times.

**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 meeting time and place) in which a group will be transported in private vehicles keep in mind the following:

- Obtain parent/guardian permission for any use of transportation outside of the meeting place
- Every driver must be an approved volunteer at least 21 years old, 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. In addition, the girl-volunteer ratios in the "Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need" section 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 the "Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need" section must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single car 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. In addition, state laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines here.

Anyone who is driving a vehicle with 12 or more passengers must be a professional driver who possesses a commercial driver’s license (CDL). Note, you must check with your council to determine specific rules about renting large vehicles. Fifteen passenger vans are not permitted.

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, except for rental car agreements, even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such agreements must instead be signed by the person designated by your council. You must contact the Lexington Service Center to arrange for rental contracts.

• 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.

• Troops that hire, borrow, or lease a bus from another organization must send, before the trip, a Certificate of Insurance to the Council Service Center. The vehicle can be used only after council approval has been obtained.

• Troops that lease vehicles (cars or vans) must complete the Vehicle Leasing Form on the day they pick up the vehicle(s). This completed form is mailed to the Council Office.

• 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. For example, in many cases the minimum age of drivers is 25, and the maximum age is often under 70. In addition, make sure the car is adequately insured and you know who is responsible for damage to, or loss of, the vehicle. Finally, ensure you have a good paper trail that shows the vehicle rental is Girl Scout–related.

• Obtain parent/guardian permission for any use of transportation outside of the meeting place.

Checklist for Drivers

It is the responsibility of the troop/group leader to ensure that drivers have a valid driver’s license and proof of insurance. Use the Troop Driver Form available on the council website, www.gskentucky.org

When driving a car, RV or camper, take the following precautions and ask all other drivers to do the same:
• Ensure all drivers are volunteers at least 21 years old
• Girls should not be transporting other girls.
• Must be registered members and have completed the volunteer background screening.
• A male volunteer may act as a driver but must never have one girl in the car alone, except for his own daughter. He must be accompanied by an unrelated female in the car.
• 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 recheck them periodically on long trips.
• Keep all necessary papers up to date including, but not limited to: your driver’s license; vehicle registration; any state or local inspections; and insurance coverage.
• Wear your seat belt at all times, and insist that all passengers do the same. Girls under 12 must ride in the back seats.
• The child restraint requirements should be followed:
  o Kentucky current law requires children younger than 8 years old or less than 57 inches tall to be secured in a booster seat. If a child is older than 8 years or over 57 inches tall, they are not required by law to ride in a booster seat.
  o Ohio’s Current law requires children younger than 8 years old, unless they are at least 4’9” tall, to use a booster seat.
• Follow all the established rules of the road in your state, including the speed limit. Some additional guidelines include: keeping a two-car-length distance between you and the car ahead of you; not talking or texting on a cell phone or other personal electronic device while driving; not using ear buds or headphones while driving; and turning your lights on when your windshield wipers are on.
• Plan rest stops every few hours and avoid driving for extended periods at night. If traveling with others, prearrange stopping places along the way. When planning longer trips, arrange for relief drivers.
• Do NOT drive when you are tired or taking medication that makes you drowsy.

Check with your council for any other specific guidelines or requirements they have.
Approaching Activities

How can you, as a Girl Scout volunteer, determine whether an activity is safe and appropriate? Good judgment and common sense often dictate the answer. What’s safe is 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. Err on the side of caution and make the safety of girls your most important consideration.

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 and 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 GSLE.

Using Safety Activity Checkpoints

When preparing for any activity with girls, start by reading the Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints for that particular activity. They are located on the Council’s website under Forms and Documents.

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 troop volunteers, parents/guardians, and the girls themselves. The checkpoints are formatted as checklists, so that you, your co-leaders, troop volunteers and girls can check off each step that has been accomplished.

If Safety Activity Checkpoints do not exist for an activity that you and your girls are interested in, check with the Council Program Department BEFORE making any definite plans with the girls.

High Adventure

The Council considers some activities to be High Adventure. In addition to following the Safety Checkpoints, they require special permission on the Parent Permission Form and the vendor must be on the Council vendor list in order to have Council permission. Vendors on the list have provided proof of insurance and follow required safety procedures. To see our approved vendor list visit: http://www.gskentucky.org/en/for-volunteers/online-support-for-volunteers/approvedvendors.html Contact the Council Program and Camp Department if there is a location that is currently not on our approved vendor list. GSWRC requires that when attending a High Risk Activity, attendees must complete a high risk form, and submitted with your troop trip approval.
Below is a list of many common high adventure activities that need vendor approval:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>Kayaking</td>
<td>Snow Tubing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpacking</td>
<td>Rock Climbing/Climbing/Rappelling</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>Rope/Initiative Courses</td>
<td>Trampolining (Indoor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating</td>
<td>Sailing</td>
<td>Water Skiing/Wind Surfing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>Scuba Diving</td>
<td>Whitewater Rafting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caving</td>
<td>Skiing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenge Courses</td>
<td>Snow Boarding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horseback riding</td>
<td>Snow Shoeing</td>
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Prohibited Activities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activitiy</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aerial tricks on bicycles, skis, snow boards, skateboards and water skis</td>
<td>Paintball Tagging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballooning; both tethered and untethered</td>
<td>Parachuting / Parasailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bubble Soccer</td>
<td>Trampolines (outdoor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungee Jumping</td>
<td>Riding motor bikes, all-terrain vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying in small planes, helicopters, sailplanes and blimps</td>
<td>Using personal watercraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang Gliding</td>
<td>Watercraft trips in Class IV and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang Gliding</td>
<td>Whitewater on unclassified rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Altitude Climbing</td>
<td>Zorbing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“It’s Not a Girl Scout Event” – Not a Good Idea!

Occasionally, a Girl Scout volunteer, in an effort to support the girls in the activities they would like to participate in, will decide to tell the girls and families that they will do the activity “as friends, and not as a Girl Scout troop” rather than find an approved vendor or modify the activity in order to comply with safety guidelines. Then the girls in the active troop/group, supervised by the Girl Scout volunteers, engage in the activity together, and the supervising adults chose not to follow a guideline established in Volunteer Essentials or Safety Activity Checkpoints.

This could jeopardize the girls’ safety and also puts both the council and the volunteer(s) at legal risk. Another important point to consider is that Girl Scout insurance does not cover participants in non-Girl Scout events. For everyone’s protection, please follow the safety guidelines that have been put in place.
Permission Slips

Every time a troop/group meets at a time or location different from the regular troop/group meeting location, you must use a permission form, even if girls are responsible for getting to that location on their own. Permission forms give parents the “who, what, when, where and why”, so that they can decide whether their daughter can participate in the trip or activity.

A signed permission form permits you to include the girl in the activity and should include the number in which a parent can be reached during the trip or activity.

Kentucky’s Wilderness Road provides an activity permission form for troop leaders to use. This is a paper form and requires parent/guardians return the form signed prior to the trip or activity.

Parent/guardian permission may be in the traditional paper form, but increasingly, members may wish to use electronic permission, which allows a much quicker return on permission slips but also raises questions about electronic signatures and scanned documents. In most cases, you do not have to include any special language, when using electronic signatures in lieu of a handwritten signature. This is because the federal Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (E-SIGN ACT) accords electronic records and electronic signature the same legal status as written records and handwritten signature. Electronic signatures include but are not limited to the following:

- Submission of an outline survey through a click
- Submit buttons or checkboxes accompanied by language to the effect of “by clicking the button/checking the box, I agree with these terms”.
- A name typed by the sender at the end of an email message
- Faxed signature or other electronic transmission of a document containing a handwritten signature
- A code or PIN (such as those used with ATM and credit cards)

Please note the following:

- E-signatures are effective only if they are in a form that is capable of being retained and accurately reproduced for later reference. This requirement can be satisfied by maintaining a log of collected e-signatures or by including a field in a database that indicates that the user gave her or his e-signature for a particular purpose.
- You’ll need to obtain parent/guardian permission each time an activity is outside the normal time and place, along with annual permission during registration.

Health Histories (Including Examinations and Immunizations)

Girl Scout health histories and records may be handled differently by each council. For example, the staff at your council office may take care of obtaining and storing girl health histories, including a physician’s examination and list of required immunizations. In other councils, you may be asked to maintain these records for your group. Either way, keep in mind that information contained in a girl’s health history is confidential and protected by law. This information may only be shared with people who have a need to know this information such as the girl herself, her parent/guardian and a healthcare provider.

At GSWRC Health History forms – which may include a physician’s examination and a list of immunizations – must be collected and kept on hand by the troop/group leader. Please keep in mind that information contained in a girl’s health history is confidential and protected by law. This information may
only be shared with people who have a need to know this information such as the girl herself, her parent/guardian and a healthcare provider.

At the beginning of each membership year, the troop leader will collect a copy of each girl’s Girl Health History/Emergency Medical Authorization Form. This form is completed by the parent/guardian.

For various reasons, some parents/guardians may object to immunizations or medical examinations. Councils must 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 be aware of any medications a girl may take or allergies she may have. Keep in mind the following:

- Medication, including over-the-counter products, must never be dispensed without prior written permission from a girl’s custodial parent or guardian (your council can provide the necessary form).
- Some girls may need to carry and administer their own medications, such as bronchial inhalers, EpiPens or diabetes medication. You must have documentation from the girl’s parent or guardian that it is acceptable for the girl to self-administer these medications.
- Common food allergies include dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts and seafood. This means that 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. Do this even if you are aware of which girls have specific allergies! Even Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies should be aware of their allergies, but double-checking with them and their parents/guardians is always a good idea.

Adult Health History
This form is not required but it may be requested by event planners depending on the type of event or activity. It is not required for standard troop meetings and non-high adventure activities. This form can be found on the council website.

Communicable Diseases
Girls Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road is committed to providing a safe, secure environment in which girls and adults can interact. Girls Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road is further committed to protecting the girl or adult suffering from chronic illness or communicable disease, as well as protecting the other girls with whom they interact.

GSWRC restricts services to those with communicable diseases only to the extent that is specifically recommended by the county health department or that the individual displays behavior that puts others at risk.

Head Lice
Head lice are one health and safety issue that is more prominent in the spring and summer. Head lice are tiny insects that live on the heads of humans; they are hard to see, lay eggs (called nits) and feed on human blood. Head lice CAN transfer from one person to another. Because of that, any girl or adult with head lice SHOULD NOT attend any Girl Scout event until the issue has been resolved.

Prevention
In order to prevent the transferring of head lice; teach your troop that they should not share items such as:

- Hair brushes and combs
- Hair clips and hair bands
- Hats and clothes
- Pillows

Screening and Treatment
If lice are present in the school district, troop leaders may want to conduct head checks before troop trips and overnights. Leaders can also work with parents to educate them on how to screen for lice before sending their girls to a Girl Scout activity. If leaders or other troop volunteers are doing the screening they should screen all girls. Please assure privacy on the issue making sure that, above all else, the girls’ health and wellbeing are being protected. You can find additional information about lice screening and treatment at your local health department.

Action Steps If Lice Are Found
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road uses the same broad standards that school districts use when girls attend Girl Scout events or activities including:

- If a girl has active lice, they will be sent home and treated before returning to the troop meeting.
- If a girl has nits only, the child is allowed to stay for the remainder of the troop meeting but the child must be treated for lice and lice free before attending another session.
- During overnight events, girls with active lice or nits will be sent home and cannot return until treated.

Parent Notification
All parents of girls in the troop should receive notification letting them know that nits or lice were found on a member of the troop and action taken by the troop leader. Care should be taken not to single out any girl. Parents of girls found carrying lice or nits should be notified about what was found and recommended action. Refer parents to the local health department for support. They should also be notified that if nits or lice are found at the next troop meeting, their daughter will be sent home.

Bed Bugs
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road’s highest concern is always for the health, safety and well-being of our members and families. With the increased media attention that the pest known as a “bed bug” has been receiving, plus its increase in population in communities, the council has implemented the following procedures at all camp facilities. These practices should be implemented when participating in any Girl Scout trips or overnights with girls.

Bed Bug Procedures for Home, Trips and Overnights
(Leaders, please share this information with your families prior to a trip or overnight.)
We are asking that you do your part in bed bug prevention not only for our facilities, but for your homes, cars and our communities. We are asking you to follow these universal precautions:

- If you suspect you’ve been in contact with bed bugs, dry all clothing and bedding in a dryer at high heat for 30 minutes prior to a trip or overnight. This would kill any bed bugs that may be present. Place clothes and bedding directly into a large garbage bag after heating. Twist the top closed, loop the twisted length over and secure with a tie, rubber band or string.
- Once you’ve placed items in large garbage bags and secured them, label the bags with masking tape with girls’ name.
During trips or overnight, girls will keep their belongings in the garbage bags to minimize the possibility of hitch-hiker bed bugs.

Learn more about bed bugs by contacting your local health department.

Service Projects

Girl Scouts may participate in service projects that involve health and safety risks – for example, service projects requiring specialized training or certification, such as lead paint removal. Service projects involving litter pick-ups, stream cleanup, adopt-a-highway programs, and other such activities that involve girls, adults and/or families picking up trash to beautify an area, need to be carefully planned because they present the following risk:

- Having children clean up along highways being used by fast-moving vehicles can present the possibility of a serious accident, unless careful coordination is established with the highway or local police. Roadside cleanups should not be done by Daisy or Brownie Girl Scouts.
- There can be serious disease potential involved in having children pick up trash, which may contain discarded drug needles, medical wastes, etc. Girls should wear gloves and be carefully instructed about the types of items they are to pick up. Special receptacles should be provided for sharp articles so that they do not protrude through a plastic trash bag and cut someone who moves the bag.

Girl Scout Activity Insurance

Every registered Girl Scout and registered volunteer member in the Girl Scout movement is automatically covered under the basic Mutual of Omaha Activity Insurance plan upon registration. The entire premium cost for this protection is borne by Girl Scouts of the USA, and the basic plan is effective during the regular fiscal year (October 1 to the following October 1). 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. This is one reason why all volunteers and girls should be registered members. It is important to remember that non-registered parents, tagalongs (brothers, sisters and friends) and other persons are not covered by the basic plan.

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

An optional Activity Insurance plan is available for Girl Scouts taking extended trips (longer than three days and two nights) and for non-members who participate in Girl Scout activities. These optional plans are secondary insurance that a council may offer to cover participants taking part in any council-approved, supervised Girl Scout activity. Contact your council to find out how to apply. In some cases, your council may make this insurance mandatory, particularly for overseas travel.
Non-Registered Girl Scout Insurance & Extended Activity
The Council requires troops/groups to purchase additional insurance when the Girl Scout activity:
- Involves non-Girl Scout participants
- Last longer than three days and two nights
- International

Non-Registered Girl Scout Insurance, sometimes called Tagalong Insurance, is needed when there is a non-scout attending the event and/or trip. Registered Girl Scouts and registered adults are already covered under our insurance, so this is only for those who are not part of our membership. To properly calculate the amount that will be charged for this type of insurance you will need to know the correct number of non-scouts attending and multiply that number by the number of days, not nights, of the event. You then multiply that number by 0.11 to get the correct total. Please remember that there is a $5 minimum on all insurance purchases, so if after calculating your total and it only comes out to $1.32, you would still be charged the $5 minimum.

Extended Troop Trip Insurance is needed for a trip lasting more than 2 nights or more than 150 miles away (one way) from the troop location. This trip needs to be approved before insurance can be purchased. Send the Extended Troop Trip Approval Application to the Program Department, as well as the Troop Roster prior to purchasing insurance.

International Troop Trip Insurance is needed for a troop trip that is international. This trip needs to be approved before insurance can be purchased. Send the International Troop Trip Approval Form to the Program Department, as well as the Troop Roster prior to purchasing insurance.

Available Insurance Plans

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Coverage Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan 2</td>
<td>$0.11 per day per participant</td>
<td>Provides secondary accident coverage if the claimant has other health insurance; provides accident coverage if claimant has no health insurance. Available for non-members participating in a Girl Scout activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan 3E</td>
<td>$0.29 per day per participant</td>
<td>Provides secondary accident/sickness coverage if the claimant has other health insurance; provides accident/sickness coverage if claimant has no health insurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan 3P</td>
<td>$0.70 per day per participant</td>
<td>Provides primary accident and health coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan 3P1</td>
<td>$1.17 per day per participant</td>
<td>Provides primary accident and health coverage and travel assistance services “safety net”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Certificate of Liability Insurance
Many organizations require that we prove we have liability insurance before they will let us use their facility. To obtain a certificate please contact your local Girl Scout Office with the complete name and address of the facility, phone number fax number, date of use, level of girls, number of girls and adults participating and the person who is to receive the certificate.

Please contact the Office Manager in the Lexington Office if you have additional questions concerning insurance.

Review the Girl Scouts insurance plan description here.

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 qualified. When planning an activity that requires an expert, please make sure they have the following:

- **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, she or he should be able to give clear instructions to girls and volunteers, troubleshoot unexpected scenarios and respond appropriately in an emergency.

Even when not required to have an expert to instruct the girls for a specific activity for safety reasons, it is always a great idea to use your personal and troop networks to find experts to teach the girls particular skills. This will enrich their experience and yours. Research performed by the Girl Scouts Research Institute has shown that girls really appreciate the opportunity to learn from experts whenever possible.

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/Guardians

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 volunteers. This should include having a first aid kit always available and making sure that if someone is injured and needs help, that one volunteer cares for the injured person while another volunteer seeks help.

Arrange for Volunteer Supervision

Volunteers 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. Volunteers must be present at booth activities, regardless of the age of the girls (see also the section "Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need").

Volunteers 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

Volunteer 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 volunteers, 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
- Avoid a house or person that makes them uncomfortable. They should walk away and find the next person/place that does not make them uncomfortable
- Call 9-1-1 if they see someone that seems to be acting in a way that makes them feel unsafe. This could include, but is not limited to, any person who is staring at them for long periods, seems to be following them for no apparent reason or takes pictures of the them
- Use safe pedestrian practices, such as crossing at corners and obeying walk signals
- Not enter the home or vehicle of a stranger, and to avoid selling to people in vehicles (except at drive-thru cookie booths) or going into alleys
- Should not carry large amounts of money (see “Plan for Safeguarding Money”, above)

Booth Sales
Cookie booths are a traditional and fun way of selling Girl Scout Cookies. Booth locations are approved by councils, facilitated within council jurisdiction and you must follow all council guidelines with regard to setting up, manning and taking down a booth.

- When setting up booth sales, it’s important that:
  - Volunteers are present at all times
  - There is adequate space at the booth for table, products and girls and to allow safe passage by pedestrians, bikes and cars.
  - Girls are a safe distance from cars. If possible, set up a safety barrier between cars and the booth—perhaps a few volunteers could park their cars in spaces near the booth location
  - The booth is not blocking a store entrance or exit
- Girls and volunteers do not confront or engage an irate customer, but call local authorities for assistance.

While girls can receive cash from buyers and make change, they should hand the money to an volunteer for safekeeping. It is important that cash is kept safe and out of sight. This can be accomplished by:
  - Keeping the cash box against a wall or behind a barrier of cookie boxes
  - Having an adult volunteer keep the money by, for example, securing it in a front-facing pouch tied around her waist.

If someone takes money or cookies from your booth, do not attempt to physically recover the stolen items and do not allow the girls to do so. Instead, get a good description of the offender(s), call 911, and alert local security (if applicable). Make sure girls know what to do in case of theft. Report any incidents to your local council according to its guidelines.

For additional information about setting up a booth and safety and security suggestions, consult your council guidelines. Find more information on our council website here: http://www.gskentucky.org/en/cookies/about-girl-scout-cookies.html

**Computer/Online Safety**

**Understand the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge**

In order to make sure that girls are aware of how to safely use the Internet, you should discuss online safety issues with the girls and distribute copies of the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge (the pledge is available at the end of this document and at www.girlscouts.org). The girls should also take a copy of the pledge home and go over it with their parents. Both the girl and her parent should sign the pledge.

**Safeguard Information**

Girls must understand that the Internet is an open means of communication that anyone can access. As such, websites will often attract people other than their intended users. It is therefore imperative that any information that could jeopardize the safety and security of girls and volunteers not be disclosed on a website. The following measures will help to ensure girls’ online safety:

- Girl Scouts should only use their first names
- A Girl Scout’s last name, address, phone number, or e-mail address should never be posted. For Digital Cookie a girl may post her unique Digital Cookie URL on her Facebook page and may email it to friends and family (for additional information please refer to Safety Activity Checkpoint for Online Product Sales, Digital Cookie Terms & Conditions for Volunteers and Digital Cookie Pledge for Girls)
- Always have a parent’s or guardian’s permission when using pictures of girls on a website. This is especially important if the girl is under 13 years old
- Do not post addresses of group meeting places, dates and times of meetings, events or trips on a website. Instead, a volunteer who wishes to communicate upcoming events with families of Girl Scouts should send an e-mail to the families
- Do not allow automatic posting of messages to a website. All postings to message boards, social media and guest books should have volunteer oversight, and be screened prior to posting live.
• Ensure that websites do not show personal e-mail addresses of girls, but use a troop, group or volunteer’s e-mail.

Safety in Technology Based Sales

Girl Scouts use the Internet for a variety of reasons including the online marketing and sale of approved Girl Scout related products. Below are some key points to keep in mind for all online sales and marketing:

• Girls must read, understand and accept the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge, prior to conducting any online sales or marketing activities, which is available at the end of the Safety Activity Checkpoints
• Girls may send e-mail messages to alert friends and relatives about product sales and accept customer commitments via email
• Social media sites may be used to market product, however, all applicable GSUSA and council guidelines must be followed
• Girls writing product e-mails or announcements online should sign with their first names only, their troop/group number or name and their council name.
• Personal e-mails or street addresses of girls should never be used. Instead, use one of the following:
  o A blind return address account where the girls’ name or personal e-mail is not revealed to the customer and is instead hosted on a secure site
  o A group account, monitored by a volunteer
  o A volunteer’s e-mail account, which is supervised by that volunteer

For Digital Cookie there are additional, specific guidelines, some of which are:

• Girls must read and accept the Girl Scout Digital Cookie Pledge before they can participate in Digital Cookie
• Volunteers must read and accept the Digital Cookie Terms and Conditions for Volunteers before they can participate in Digital Cookie
• Girls may only post about their participation on Digital Cookie on social media that allows them to restrict access to friends and family (e.g. Facebook).
• Parents/guardians must approve the content of a girls Digital Cookie web page before it goes live
• For girls under 13 years old, a parent/guardian must manage the girl’s web site and be responsible for all content. In other words, girls under 13 are not allowed to post anything to their websites; it must be done by their parent/guardian.


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What to do if …

There is an Accident

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 injured person. Follow established council procedures 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. The council provides troop leadership with an emergency card that contains basic information on what to do and has the emergency council contact number. A staff person is available 24/7 via the emergency number to assist in handling emergency situations.

**Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road**

**Emergency Management Plan**

**Emergency Number:** 859-490-9406

In line with recommendations from Girl Scouts of the USA, our council has developed a plan and a team to help respond to any emergency needing the attention of more than local troop or service unit personnel. Such emergencies are incidents of a serious nature that occur during Girl Scout activities. An emergency is defined as any of the following:

- A fatality or serious injury requiring urgent or emergency medical treatment
- A traffic accident involving Girl Scouts during Girl Scout activities
- An illness serious enough to require hospitalization
- Any situation which involves law enforcement officers
- Allegation of child molestation or rape
- Lost participant
- Kidnapping
- Allegation of tampering with products sold
- Threat of legal action
- Other occurrences that may have adverse media or legal implications

After receiving a report of an accident, council staff will immediately arrange for additional assistance at the scene, if needed, and will notify parents/guardians, as appropriate. If a Girl Scout needs emergency medical care as the result of an accident or injury, first contact emergency medical services, and then follow council procedures for accidents and incidents. Your adherence to these procedures is critical, especially with regard to notifying parents or guardians. If the media is involved, let council-designated staff discuss the incident with media representatives.

In the event of a fatality or other serious accident, the police must be notified and a responsible volunteer must remain at the scene at all times. In the case of a fatality, do not disturb the victim or surroundings and follow police instructions. Do not share information about the accident with anyone but the police, your council and, if applicable, insurance representatives or legal counsel.
Procedures for Accidents and Emergencies

In case of Minor Illness

Call a parent to come for the child. If no one is available to pick up the child, an adult should take the child home. Assure that someone is home to care for the child. DO NOT LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED.

In Case of a Minor Accident

1. Immediately give first aid or find a first aider; transport the injured person to an emergency room and telephone the parent.
2. Ask the parent to come to the site or meet at the emergency room, if appropriate (If parents cannot be reached, call the person designated to act in emergency. Continue trying to reach the parents so they can assume responsibility for medical decisions.)
3. Record in writing:
   a. Condition existing at time of accident
   b. Order of events following the accident
   c. Names and addresses of witnesses
   d. Medical attention, opinion or instructions received from parents
4. Notify the Council Office as soon as possible (within 48 hours).
5. Submit completed insurance forms and a copy of the record of the accident to the Council Office

In Case of a Serious Accident, Emergency or Fatality

6. Secure services of trained medical professionals or first aider on site and give priority to providing all possible care to victim(s).
7. Permit no disturbance to victim(s) or surroundings.
8. Retain a responsible adult at the scene
9. Secure doctor, ambulance and/or the police (You are responsible until police assume responsibility)
11. Council notification. After notifying parents/guardians and emergency authorities, council staff must be notified immediately of any serious accident or injury. Please use the emergency number to contact a staff member. Council staff will immediately arrange for additional assistance at the scene, if needed, and will continue to support you through the situation.
12. Exercise care that any statement made orally or in writing reflects only the fact of the incident. Do not make any statements that could be interpreted either as an assumption of, or rejection of, responsibility for the accident
13. Statements should only be made to the family, the authorities, medical personnel and the council staff person handling the emergency number.
14. Refer all media (newspaper, radio, TV) inquiries to the Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road’s Communications Department. Only designated paid staff or council representatives may speak for the council.
15. File an Incident/Accident report Form within 24 hours of an injury to the council office.
In Case of an Automobile Accident

16. Call the nearest law enforcement agency. A responsible person must remain at the scene of the accident and ensure that nothing at the scene is disturbed until arrival of the law enforcement official.

17. Obtain the following information from the other driver(s) and on vehicle(s) involved:
   e. Make of vehicle(s), year, color, state and license plate number(s)
   f. Name, address, phone number and driver’s license number of driver(s) involved and passengers’ names and addresses and phone numbers
   g. Name of insurance company(s) covering driver(s)/vehicle(s) involved.

18. Record a brief description of what happened and the time it occurred.

19. File an Incident/Accident report Form within 24 hours to the council office.

Someone Needs 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 volunteers any accidents, illnesses or unusual behaviors during Girl Scout activities. You can help girls by keeping in mind the following:

- **Know what to report.** See the “What To Do If There is an Accident” section earlier in this chapter.
- **Establish and practice procedures for weather emergencies.** Know the type of extreme weather to expect in your area (e.g. tornadoes, hurricanes and lightning). Please consult with your 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 issues.** Every girl and adult volunteer 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 make a significant difference in the severity of an injury. In an emergency, secure professional medical assistance as soon as possible, normally by calling 911, and then administer first aid, if appropriately trained.

**First-Aid/CPR**

Emergencies require prompt action and quick judgment. For many activities, Girl Scouts recommends 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 Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association or other sponsoring organizations approved by your council. As a partner of GSUSA, American Red Cross offers discounts on certification courses.
## ORGANIZATION
## CHOICES OF COURSES LEVEL 1 FIRST AIDER REQUIREMENTS
## CHOICES OF COURSES LEVEL 2 FIRST AIDER REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Level 1 First Aider Requirements</th>
<th>Level 2 First Aider Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Heart Association</td>
<td>• For CPR Training</td>
<td>• For CPR Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>• Community First Aid and Safety including CPR</td>
<td>• Sport Safety Training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Standard First Aid including CPR</td>
<td>• Standard First Aid including CPR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Child CPR (For Daisy Girl Scout Leaders)</td>
<td>• First Aid, When Help is Delayed</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Safety &amp; Health Institute</td>
<td>• Basic First Aid plus American Heart Association CPR</td>
<td>• Frist Aid Responding to Emergencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMP America</td>
<td>• Pediatric Medic First Aid, Level 1, including CPR</td>
<td>• Emergency Response*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Safety Council</td>
<td>• Standard First Aid and CPR</td>
<td>• Advanced First Aid and CPR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Wilderness First Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• First Responder *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These courses far exceed the requirements for Girl Scout First-Aider but may be used.

**Caution:** First-aid/CPR training that is 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 your support team or council prior to enrolling in the course.

### 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. First Aid certifications must be valid at the time of service. Check out our website under events for a list of upcoming classes. First Aid training is a legitimate use of troop funds.

### When is a First-Aider needed?

Use your best judgement to determine if your troop needs a First Aider present. We strongly recommend having a Level 1 First Aider at all times, but one **must** be present for overnights, physically demanding activities and events with potential for injury such as camping or high adventure activities. Be sure to review the **Safety Activity Checkpoints** for your particular activity to see if a First Aider is required. If a
First Aider is required for a certain activity, but will be provided by the vendor at the site or the coordinator of the event, then you may not need to bring your own. Be sure to check with the host when registering.

**When Do I Need a Level 2 First Aider?**

The Safety Activity Checkpoints always tell you when a first-aider needs to be present. Since activities can take place in a variety of locations, the presence of a first-aider and the qualifications they need to have are based on the remoteness of the activity. For example, if you take a two-mile hike in an area that has cell phone reception and service along the entire route and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) is no more than 30 minutes away at all times the first-aider will not need to have knowledge of wilderness first aid. If, on the other hand, you take the same two-mile hike in a more remote area with no cell phone service and where EMS is more than 30 minutes away, the first-aider must have knowledge of wilderness first aid (see the chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to EMS</th>
<th>Minimum Level of First Aid Required</th>
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<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</td>
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</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 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.

**Medical Professionals as First Aiders**

In addition, the following certified and/or licensed healthcare providers may also serve as Level 1 or Level 2 First Aiders for the troop: 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 Girl Scout first-aid kit, you can buy 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*](http://www.redcross.org) (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 and the like.
In addition to standard materials, all kits should contain your council and emergency telephone numbers (which you can get from your council contact). Girl Scout activity insurance forms, parent consent forms and health histories may also be included.

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.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that a child is abused or neglected is to report that information. Physical proof or other forms of validation are not required. It is the responsibility of the local children’s services agency, through its investigation, to determine if abuse or neglect is in fact occurring. Reports may be made anonymously.

Number for reporting abuse is: Kentucky 800-752-6200, Ohio 614-466-9824 or contact the county Department of Social Services.

If reporting, try to include the names and addresses of the child and her parents/guardians, the child’s age and the nature of the child’s injuries, abuse or neglect, and any other information that might help in establishing the cause of the injury, abuse or neglect. Record the name of the intake worker who takes the report and note the date that the report is made.

If you believe a child is in imminent danger and is in need of immediate protection, call the local police department.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all levels. Do not share this information with anyone other than the local children’s services agency and report it immediately to the Council Office.

For additional information please check the following resources:

- Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect: https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm
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 sale activities (such as Girl Scout cookie activities), group money-earning activities (council-approved, of course), and any 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, and understand how to collaborate with sponsors and causes.

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

Troop Funding

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 troop 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 troops are funded by a share of money earned through Council sponsored product sale activities, group money-earning activities, and any dues your troop may charge. The troop treasury belongs to the entire group. The troop should keep enough money in their bank account to cover activities planned during the year.

Troop Funding Comes From Three Funding Sources

**Troop Dues and Start-Up Fees**

Troops can decide on their own whether or not they will collect dues at each meeting and/or assess a start-up fee per girl as the troop organizes. New troops do have miscellaneous expenses which need to be covered, and leaders often need to purchase supplies for meeting activities. Until the troop has sold cookies and/or participated in the Fall Product program, it will not have funds on hand for such items. It is common practice to ask families to pay an up-front start-up fee to assist the troop as it begins.

Additionally, troops often decide that girls will bring a small amount of dues to each meeting. Families might decide that girls can earn their troop dues by helping out at home. Girls can assist an adult in collecting and recording dues at the meeting. Dues amounts might be $0.50 to $1.00 for example.

Troops should keep a receipt book and money bag or other tracking system to use at their meetings. It is important to provide receipts to families for submitted funds and to keep troop monies separate from personal funds until it can be deposited.
Product Sales
The Girl Scout Cookie and Fall Product (magazines, nuts and candy) Programs are organized by our Council and open to all Girl Scouts. Girls are encouraged to participate in both Council-sponsored product sale activities each year. These programs not only provide troop funding but are a major funding source for all Council operations. Specific details about these program are found in this publication.

Money-Earning Events
When a troop needs to supplement its dues and product sales earnings for a special trip or program, the troop may plan a money-earning event to help with the costs. The event is organized by the troop (not by the Council), approved by the service unit manager, with the final approval from the Program Department, and planned and carried out by girls (in partnership with adults). If you are hosting a money-earning event in which the GSLE is included you are highly encouraged to add this to the Training and Program Calendar (TAP). See details on the approval process in this publication.

Communicating with Families
Families who are new to Girl Scouts often have no idea what funds it takes to run a troop. It is very helpful if you will periodically put together a report of expenditures, funds on hand, and plans that are ahead. This will reassure the parents that you are managing funds with care as well as to help them know the costs involved in making a troop function.

When the troop is new, families will usually have to pay for outings, for badges and pins, and other such expenses. Later, the troop treasury will be able to handle at least part of these expenses. Troops that are successful cookie sellers often become financially able to pay for nearly everything; badges, registration fees and more.

Best Practices for Troop Accounts
One critical task for each group, is to keep excellent records and establish a clear accounting system for all money earned and spent. As the group’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.

These are Troop Funds, not Girl Funds
- Remember, all Girl Scout troop funds are the common resource of the troop. No troop funds, regardless of source, are held for or accounted for individual girls. This is a very important principle in the mission of Girl Scouting and in compliance with IRS regulations.

These are no secrets
- All troop financial matters are completely public transactions. Transparency is the rule. If you and your co-signer would be uncomfortable with one of your troop transactions appearing on the front page of your local newspaper, then you probably should not complete the transaction. Please note that troop accounts may be audited if questions are raised about expenditures.

Always have a receipt
- No matter how honest you are, you still need to prove that all your troop transactions are accurate and appropriate. This means you must have a receipt for every troop expense. It might help to
keep these receipts in a folder or stapled in a notebook in chronological order. Remember, always file a receipt with your troop expenses.

Don’t mix funds

- Troop funds should only be kept in a troop bank account. Funds from leaders’ personal accounts or other troop accounts should not be mixed.

Never pay yourself

- A signer on a troop account should never write a check to themselves. Similarly, an adult should never make a purchase using a troop account debit card for their benefit (ex: Individual meals, fuel). There are multiple signers on troop accounts for a reason. A co-signer can easily reimburse a signer for appropriate troop expenses. There should always be a third party in each transaction, safeguarding troop assets from self-interested transactions.

Report regularly (suggested twice a year)

- The best way to avoid questions, rumors and suspicion is to answer questions before they are asked. Girls and parents have worked hard to contribute and earn troop funds, so it is natural that they should be interested in how funds are kept and spent. A simple, written report showing income and expenses should be provided to troop families in the middle of the year (December/January) and at the end of the year (May/June). This report should match the most recent bank statement, a copy of which should be provided as well. The report should be signed by the bank account co-signers and should provide an easy contact point for questions.

It’s the troop’s money – involve the girls as much as possible in managing the troop finances.

- Having the girls assist in managing the troop’s finances, paying troop bills, and preparing the quarterly reports is a terrific way to teach important life skills, build interest and involvement, and promote transparency and fairness. Please use this opportunity to build a financially literate troop.

Sales Tax Exempt Certificates – Save money where you can.

- Purchases for troops, service units, areas, and camps can be made under the council’s sales tax exemption. Please provide the tax exempt form to the vendor at the time of purchase. *Note: some vendors, such as franchise restaurants may require advance notice for use of the tax exempt certificate.

Year End Troop Financial Report

Once a year troops should submit a Troop Financial Report to Troop Support. Complete the Troop Financial Report as part of the Annual Troop Review the (Online survey) and attach the financial report plus your last bank statement. This final report is due June 15th and is required before starting your troop up again in the fall. While this is MANDATORY once a year, the council may request this information at any time throughout the year (from any signer on the account).

Establishing an Account

If your group is earning and spending money, the group needs to set up a bank account. If you’re taking over an existing group, you may inherit a checking account, but with a new group, you’ll want to open a new account. Remember to work with your Service Unit Treasurer to open your troop bank account prior to doing any troop fund-raising. Consider these tips when working with a 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 group funds and for keeping a daily account of expenditures.
- Have one or more back-up people who also have debit cards, in case the main card is lost.
- Handle a lost group debit card the same way you would a personal debit card: cancel it immediately.

Follow your council’s financial policies and procedures for setting up an account. Most council-sponsored product sale activities have specific banking and tracking procedures.

Unused Girl Scout money left in accounts when groups disband becomes the property of the council. Prior to disbanding, the group may decide to donate any unused funds to their Service Unit, another troop or for girl activities. Girl activities can include purchasing materials to support another organization through take-action projects. When closing a troop 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. Turn remaining funds over to a council staff member.

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**Money Owned to the Council or Taken/Borrowed From Girl Scout Troop/Group Accounts**

GSWRC reserves the right to pursue collection effort and/or prosecute to the fullest extent allowable under the law. Situations involving large amounts of money or product may require that a police report be filed, and/or be referred to the District Attorney for investigation. Additionally, individuals involved in delinquencies, theft, or misuse of troop funds (such as borrowing funds from the troop account for personal use) will face release from their current Girl Scout position and ineligibility for future appointment. Primary communication with collection attempts will begin and will be the responsibility of council staff. Failure to repay the amount owed can result in immediate criminal charges, notification to creditors, and referral for collection by an outside agency.

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**GSWRC Troop Financial Policies (2011 Board Approved)**

1. Girls Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road requires funds in troop treasuries to be kept in checking or savings accounts in the name of the council and troop number. Banks accounts must follow council guidelines for account naming and shall use the council tax identification number.
2. Each account shall have at least three (3) signatures. One of those signatures must be the Service Unit Manager (SUM) or Service Unit Treasurer (SUT). The Service Unit Manager or Service Unit Treasurer must keep a record of all troop bank accounts with account numbers.
3. Signers must be registered members of Girl Scouts and have completed a background check.
4. Signers must not be husband and wife.
5. Signer must not have a previous history of misuse of Girl Scout funds.
6. The troop account address must be either the leader or co-leader’s home address in order to receive banking information.
7. GSWRC will pursue outstanding debts owed to the council and when practical, debts owed to registered troops up to and including appropriate legal action.

Some banks will require all signers to be at the bank together. Each bank differs in their procedures and fees for services. Your Service Unit Manager may be able to direct you to banks that handle troop accounts well.

Consider these tips when working with a troop account:

- Keep troop funds in the bank before an activity or trip, paying for as many items in advance of your departure.
- Use debit cards during the activity or trip.
- Make one person responsible for troop funds and for keeping a daily account of expenditures.

Steps for Opening Your Troop Bank Account

Step 1: Contact your Service Unit Manager/Service Unit Treasurer for assistance in setting up your bank account. Make sure that you have at least two signers from your troop for this account.

Step 2: Ensure that all signers are registered members of GSWRC and have completed background checks.

Step 3: Complete the GSWRC Authorization to Open a Bank Account form Using the Council Tax ID# and open your account.

Step 4: Fund your account. Most banks require at least $50 to open an account.

Step 5: You will need to complete the ACH Withdrawal Authorization Form. You will attach a pre-printed VOIDED check with the form and sign. This allows GSWRC to sweep your account during Fall Product and Cookie Sales. This makes it very easy for the troop. Deposit your sales money and on specific dates your account is swept for the amount you owe, leaving your profit.

Requesting a Bank Letter

Most banks accept the Authorization to Open a Bank Account Using the Council Tax ID# form. But occasionally a bank will request a letter authorizing the troop to use the Council’s tax identification number. Should this occur, please contact your local office and request a letter be sent. Remember if you are changing signers on an account your Service Unit Manager/Service Unit Treasurer can assist you with this process.

If a bank requests your social security number or personal demographic information, please contact the council finance department before proceeding.

Managing Your Account

It is suggested that you use the following guidelines in managing the troop bank account:

Deposits: All troop funds should be promptly deposited in the troop checking account. Note the source of funds including girls’ names if appropriate on deposit slip.
**Tax Exempt Number:** Expenditures made with Girl Scout money and for a Girl Scout purpose can also be sales tax exempt. Each business has a different procedure for this so check before you purchase. Be sure you take the GSWRC Tax Exempt form.

**Purchases:** When possible, purchase supplies, equipment, goods and services with the troop check card or check and use the Sales Tax Exempt form for all purchases. It is also important to only use the troop bank account for appropriate troop expenses. If a troop leader or troop treasurer has a question about appropriate purchases, the Service Unit Manager/Service Unit Treasurer can be consulted. Here is a partial list of appropriate use of troop money:

- Supplies, equipment (which become troop property), goods and services purchased for troop
- Service Unit events
- Troop event and field trips
- Donations to SHARE or Juliette Low World Friendship Fund
- Any required training for outdoor or high adventure
- First Aid training for (one) adult in the troop
- Volunteer Screening for required troop committee members
- Leader books and resources
- Babysitting while troop leader attends training or meeting – must be determined in advance at a Parents’ Meeting and all parents must be aware of the situation and need
- Recognitions for girls (such as earned badges and pines)
- Recognition for adult volunteers (i.e. token of appreciation for Cookie Mom, Troop Treasurer, etc.)

**Reimbursements:**

- If a volunteer requires reimbursement, request should be made within two weeks of purchase and include a receipt. (Two week rule may be waived for invoices)
- Reimbursements should be made by check with a memo note justifying payment.
- If a signer on the account or a member of his/her family is receiving reimbursement, one of the alternate signers must review the receipts and sign the check.

**Reporting and Compliance:**

- Troops are required to report once a year (June 15th) on their troop account and should submit the last bank statement at that time.
- Troop leaders and Troop Treasurers need to be aware that the SU Manager or SU Treasurer will be reviewing and may request additional documentation for selected bank transactions.
- If inconsistencies are identified with the use of troop funds, the SU Manager/SU Treasurer will report them to their Troop Support Specialist. If it is determined that there is a possible misuse of troop funds, a meeting will be requested.
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.

**Girl Scout Daisies**

- The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and does all group budgeting.
- Families may decide they will contribute to the cost of activities.
- Girls can participate in Girl Scout cookie activities and other council-sponsored product sales.
- 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.

**Girl Scout Brownies**

- The group volunteer handles money, keeps financial records, and shares some of the group-budgeting responsibilities.
- Girls discuss the cost of activities (supplies, fees, transportation, rentals, and so on).
- Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product sales.
- Girls may decide to pay dues.

**Girl Scout Juniors**

- The group volunteer retains overall responsibility for long-term budgeting and record-keeping, but shares or delegates all other financial responsibilities.
- Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product sales.
- Girls decide on group dues, if any. Dues are collected by girls and recorded by a group treasurer (selected by the girls).
- Girls budget for the short-term needs of the group, based on plans and income from the dues.
- Girls budget for more long-term activities: overnight trips, group camping, and special events.
- Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Bronze Award, if they are pursuing it.
Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls estimate costs based on plans.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Girls determine the amount of group dues (if any) and the scope of money-earning projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls set goals for and participate in council-sponsored product sales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls budget for extended travel, Take Action projects, and leadership projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls may be involved in seeking donations for Take Action projects, with council approval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls keep their own financial records and give reports to parents and group volunteers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls budget for Take Action projects, including the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards, if they are pursuing them.</td>
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Money-Earning Basics

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 volunteers) and that earn money for the group.

- Troops must participate in the cookie sale to be eligible to hold additional money-earning activities. New troops are exempt until they have been active during cookie sale season.

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.

Additional Money-Earning Projects

• Girl Scouts don’t sell any commercial products beyond those in the Fall Product Sale and the Cookie Program. That means no Avon, Thirty-One, candy bars, etc. Girl Scouts also forbids direct solicitation of cash and games of chance.
• There are no door-to-door sales other than cookie sales.
• There are to be no booth or other sales that impede traffic.
• Girls must be involved in the planning and implementing of the money earning project.
• Girl Scout Daisies (in kindergarten and first grade) may be involved in council-sponsored product sale activities, but they cannot collect money in any other way except through group dues or parental contributions.
• All troop fund raising activities and service unit fund raising activities, other than cookie sales, fall product sales and recycling activities, must have written approval of the Service Unit Manager, one month prior to the project. A complete report of money-earning activities, including an evaluation, must be submitted to the Council Program Department within one month of the completion of the project.
• Group money earning activities need to be suited to the age and abilities of the girls.
• 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.
• Troops or Service Units wishing to conduct money-earning activities must have participated in the most recent cookie sale, if registered at that time.
• 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
ooking 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.

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.

For information on working with a sponsor, consult your council; it can give you guidance on the availability of sponsors, recruiting responsibility, and any council policies or practices that must be followed. Your council may already have relationships with certain organizations, or may know of some reasons not to collaborate with certain organizations.

Troop Sponsorship

Troop sponsorship is a partnership between a Girl Scout troop and a community organization or business, working together to promote the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Troop sponsorship is a way to strengthen relationships between Girl Scouts and the community. Sponsorship is a voluntary association (on behalf of a troop) between the council and a community organization or business whose aims and objectives are compatible with Girl Scouting.

Each troop is encouraged to locate a sponsor. Possible sponsors may include: service or social clubs, places of worship, recreation or community centers, civic clubs, schools or educational groups or businesses.

Formalizing a sponsorship includes signing an agreement, accounting for any donations, offering service and acknowledging the sponsor. A sponsorship form can be found on the council web site. A copy of your troop sponsorship form should be sent to your local Girl Scout office to put on file.

A troop sponsor can enhance a troop experience by:
- Providing a space for meetings or special events.
- Suggesting potential volunteers for support of the troop.
- Servicing as a source for program opportunities, craft supplies and troop materials.
- Providing career exploration opportunities for girls.
- Securing community support and resources.
- Working with the troop on community service projects
- Providing troop adult solicited “start-up funds” for troops.
- As a general rule, troops should seek sponsors within their own service unit geographic area.

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.

*Occasional allowances for fundraising may be made by GSUSA in the case of natural disasters.*

**Funding Opportunities and Donation**

**REMEMBER:** Only the council holds non-profit status. While a troop or service unit is a part of the council, neither qualifies on its own as a non-profit organization with a unique charitable identification number. If you become aware of a funding possibility that involves an individual, foundation or business, please contact the Fund Development Department. They will work with you to secure the funding if it is an appropriate action.

**Key Points:**

- Donations for troops/service units will only be tax deductible if they are processed through the council.
- Troops/Service Units will complete the *Contribution Request Form* and have it signed by the membership specialist where it will be sent to the Fund Development Department for processing.
- The donation check should be made out to the council with the troop’s number in the memo-line in the bottom right corner. (If you do not have the troop number on the check to designate the funds the money will be processed as an unrestricted fund).
- Once the Finance Department received the *Contribution Request form* with the Troop Support Specialist’s signature, the council will process the donation.
The Finance Department does a “check-run” and mails out checks every two weeks, so it may take more than a few days for the troop to receive their check.

Any financial gift to the Girl Scout organization, including to a troop/group, particularly of gifts of $100+, must be officially acknowledge in accordance with IRS regulations. For assistance with this process, please contact the Fund Development Department.

Smaller donations can still be processed by request through the council for a tax deductible letter with completion of the Contribution Request Form.

Financial Assistance

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road is committed to providing a positive experience to every girl who wants to be a Girl Scout. No Girl Scout will be left behind. Financial assistance is provided so that a family’s economic status will not be a barrier to any girl’s ability to participate in Girl Scouting.

Troops are highly encouraged to utilize profits from product sale programs and other troop funds to budget for membership fees. Setting budgets and managing troop funds is a part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. GSWRC does not provide funds for troop start-up fees, troop dues, or troop activities.

In general, families should be prepared to pay what portion they can for membership fees. Any outstanding portion of the fee can then be covered through GSWRC financial assistance. Assistance is available for the following:

Membership Financial Assistance: Financial assistance is available for girls and adults who cannot afford the membership fee.

- During the online registration process an individual will be given the opportunity to select financial assistance. When they indicate that they need financial assistance they will get a box that will inform them that a staff person will contact them.
- They should receive a call within the week concerning their financial assistance. If more than a week goes by without a contact, ask the individual to contact the office.
- When a staff person calls concerning financial assistance, they will ask if they need financial assistance for membership. That assistance will be approved by that staff person and processed.
- If the person indicates that they need financial assistance for uniform pieces, they will be sent a link to the financial assistance uniform request form. The individual will be asked to provide proof on income within 10 days to receive financial assistance.

Uniform Assistance:

- Financial assistance will pay for basic uniform pieces – flag, Council ID Strips, troop number(s) and vest/tunic/sash.
- Financial assistance does not pay for books.

Girl Programs: Girls may apply for financial assistance for a specific program including resident and day camps. There is a separate request form. Contact the Program Department when requesting assistance for programs.
**Setting Realistic Goals**

Girl Scouts gives girls opportunities to plan activities they might not have considered on their own. Troop leaders should encourage girls to develop a realistic plan to achieve those goals.

If troops are asking families to pay a portion of an activity cost they should consider what is realistic for the majority of their families. Be sensitive to current financial circumstances of your families so as to not prevent girls from participating in activities.

**Financial Procedures When Troops/Groups Change**

**Girls Changing Troops/Groups**

If one or more girls move from one troop to another troop within the council, their original troop account stays intact and no funds are transferred. When girls are placed/accepted into an existing troop they participate in the activities planned by that group and work within the constraints of that group’s treasury.

**Merging Troops/Groups**

If two troops/groups merge, the funds from both troops/groups are combined into one account.

**Bridging Troops/Groups**

Multi-age troops/groups with girls bridging to a new level and thus into a new troop/group may transfer a proportionate amount of the former group funds to the new troop/group. The former troop/group is not considered disbanded.

**Splitting Troops/Groups**

If the entire troop/group (ALL girls and families) mutually decide to split or divide, it is appropriate for the troop/group to decide to split the funds of the existing troop/group proportionally. However, if a small group decides to split off to form a new group, they do so with the understanding that they have no claim to their “share” of the funds unless the troop/group decides together to split the funds in this way. Contact your Service Unit Manager/Treasurer or Council Staff Representative for assistance in the process/procedures to split the funds.

**Disbanding Procedures**

A disbanded troop/group is no longer meeting or the troop has not registered for at least four months from the expiration date of the last registration. If one or more girls from a disbanding troop/group are placed into one or several other active troops/groups within the council, a percentage of the troop/group funds transfers to the new group(s). The percentage is determined by dividing the total amount in the account by the number of girls in the troop/group at the time of disbanding. This division is made regardless of an individual girl’s contribution through product sales and other money-earning means.

The apportioned amount of money per girl is transferred directly from the disbanding troop/group bank account to the other active group(s) bank account(s) and may not be given to any individual girl or adult. The transfer of funds must take place within 90 days of the troop/group disbanding. The council will hold all un-apportioned funds until the beginning of the following membership year in case the disbanding troop re-organizes. If the troop/group reactivated during the 12 month period, the funds will be returned to the troop/group by written request to the council. After that all custodial funds from disbanded troops/groups will be transferred into *Girl Financial Assistance*.  

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When a troop/group disbands:

Before disbanding, check with troop parents to see if there is a volunteer willing to take over the leadership of the troop. If the troop/group decides not to re-register or decides to stop meeting during the membership the year, the leader is to:

1. Notify the Service Unit Manager.
2. Help the girls decide how to use existing troop/group funds. This decision should be made by the girls. Please note: the funds are for Girl Scout activities and are not to be retained by individuals as their property. Girls may contribute a portion of their troop/group treasury to organizations or projects that they consider worthwhile. Appropriate use of funds includes donations to the GSWRC Girl Assistance Fund, Juliette Gordon Low World Friendship Fund, purchasing Lifetime Membership for graduating high school seniors or a donation to another organization of the girls’ choice.
3. Complete the Troop Disband Form
4. Complete a Troop/Group Finance Form
5. Remit any remaining funds to the council.
6. Turn anything (checkbook, bank statements, ATM cards, deposit slips, troop/group equipment and supplies) to your Service Unit Manager or local office.

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 sale 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 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 GSLE. 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.

Before beginning any cookies or other product sales with your group, refer to the cookies section of Girl Scout Central and www.girlscoutcookies.org
A Sweet Tradition

It has been decades 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. For more on Girl Scout Cookie History, visit http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_cookies/history.asp

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 sale. Your council also establishes guidelines and procedures for conducting the sale and determines how the proceeds and girl reward 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 volunteers 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.

One critical task for each troop/group, is to keep excellent records and establish a clear accounting system for all money earned and spent. As the group’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.
The Girl/Volunteer Partnership

Underlying all the lessons that girls can learn from their participation in the Girl Scout Cookie Program is the girl/volunteer partnership. Ideally, this is a partnership between the girl and her leader and between the girl and her parents or guardian. Volunteers do not sell cookies, they participate only in supporting the direct involvement of girls.

During the Girl Scout Cookie Program the girl/volunteer partnership may look like this:

- A volunteer and girl working together to make plans and set goals.
- A volunteer assisting a girl by giving her access to the information and training she needs but letting the girl do the selling and delivering of cookies.
- A volunteer guiding a girl in understanding the finances and letting her practice the skills.
- A volunteer advising a girl on how to market her cookies but allowing her to make her make her own decisions.
- A volunteer helping a girl understand her responsibility to support her local council but ensuring that her participation is voluntary.

Safely Selling Girl Scout Cookies

Girl safety is the top priority while selling Girl Scout Cookie and other products. Volunteers, Parents and girls should be familiar with and practice the following:

- Chapter 4 Safety Wise – Volunteer Essentials
- Girl Scout Cookie/Council – Sponsored Product Sale Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Safety Tips for Product Sales
- Computer/Online Use: Safety Activity Checkpoints

Preparing for your Girl Scout Cookie Booths

Cookie booths, or temporary sales set-ups in areas with lots of foot traffic, are a popular way for girls to sell cookies as a team.

If you are organizing a Service Unit sponsored booth, please follow these guidelines:

- Obtain permission in writing and check out the book site before the day of the sale.
- Talk to business owners in the area so they'll know what to expect.
- Find out what security measures are in place—these may include lights for evening sales and whether a security camera watches the booth area—and where the nearest bathrooms are located.
- In addition, review the Girl Scout Cookie/Council-Sponsored Product Sale Safety Activity Checkpoints, as well as Chapter 4, Safety-Wise to make sure you and the girls are as prepared as possible.

On the day of the sale, these tips will help make booth sales enjoyable for everyone:

- Ensure that you have adequate space at the booth (table, products, and girls) to allow safe passage by pedestrians, bikes, and cars.
- Plan to have at least two volunteers and one girl at the booth at all times. At least one of those volunteers must be registered with the council and have a background check. From time to time,
volunteers might want to take breaks or will have to accompany young girls to the bathroom, so make sure to have a few extra volunteers on hand.

- Girls make all sales, except in cases where volunteers are helping Daisies handle money.
- Respect the surrounding businesses by making sure your booth isn’t blocking a store entrance or exit.
- Attract customers with colorful signs. Remind girls to be polite and to have their sales pitch ready for interested shoppers.
- Report any suspicious people in the area to local security.

**Cookie Donation Programs**

GSWRC organizes a “Cookie Share Program” where customers purchase cookies for the sole purpose of having them donated to Operation Troop Aide and local organizations such as Kentucky State Police Trooper Island. 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.

• Digital Cookie is the only approved online sales tool available for girls to use when selling cookies. Outside of Digital Cookie, girls cannot set up online sites where cookies are sold and money is exchanged via the Internet.

• 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 volunteers.

• 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.

Using Social Media

A girl (or group of girls) may work in partnership with an adult to market cookies and other products online, using the social media account (such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, or LinkedIn) of the adult. Social media is a fun, fast way to get out an urgent message, such as “It’s Girl Scout Cookie Time!” Posting, tweeting, or pinning such a message will get the attention of friends and family.

Before girls use social media as a marketing tool, keep the following in mind:

- Girls must have parental permission to use social media.
- Girls must meet age limits set by the provider, which is 13 and above in most cases, as per the United States Child Online Privacy and Protection Act and the Child Online Protection Act.
- Any use of photos requires a photo-release form signed by families of the girls pictured and the signature of any adult pictures.
- Any use of online video shared sited (such as YouTube), where the video is representing Girl Scouts or Girl Scout products, must follow specific requirements for that site, as well as council guidelines. Girl Scout photo release forms must also be signed by families and any adult pictures.

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 volunteer must use only blind emails or the online marketing tools provided by GSUSA product vendors on their websites.
Setting Up Facebook or 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 council, yes, but it can be a fantastic way for girls to share information, market Girl Scout products, and talk about their Take Action projects.*

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 website.) Check with your council’s website for complete graphics guidelines and approvals.

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.

Helping Girls Reach Their Financial Goals

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!

There are Financial Literacy and Cookie Business earned awards for all grade levels.

- Girl Scout Daisies can earn leaves that go with their Daisy petals.
- Girl Scout Brownies – Ambassadors can earn badges every year. These badges are progressive with grade-level specific skill building as the girls get older.

Managing Service Unit Funds

The Girl Scout Service Unit Manager is accountable for the management of Girl Scout Service Unit funds, even if another volunteer is appointed to help manage the Girl Scout Service Unit Funds. The Service Unit Manager may appoint another volunteer to serve as the Service Unit Treasurer and manage the Service Unit funds. All volunteers handling money must be registered members of GSUSA, complete a GSWRC criminal Background Check and support the principles of Girl Scouting.

Spending Funds: Always keep in mind that Girl Scouting is a girl organization and all funds spent should benefit the girls. As a guideline, it is recommended that Girl Scout Service Unit funds should be spent as follows:

- 75% Direct Benefit for Girls
- 15% Operational Expenses
- 10% Adult Recognition

Service Unit funds may be used toward the purchase of the following:

- Postage/postcards
- Office supplies (paper, copies, checks, etc.)
- Girl Scout Leader Appreciation Gifts/Events
- Offset some Girl Scout Service Unit Event Costs
- Girl Scout Service Unit Equipment
- Resource Materials (Handbooks, Songbooks, etc.)
- Annual Meeting Registration/Meals for Delegates
- Girl Scout Troop/Group Start-Up Money
- Membership Recruitment Events

A financial report Service Unit Accounts/Girl Program Accounts is due to the local Girl Scout Office once a year on June 15th. A copy of the report should also be shared with the members of your Service Unit. The fiscal year of a Girl Scout Service Unit is June 1 – May 31. While this is MANDATORY once a year, the council may request this information at any time throughout the year (from any signer on the account).
Chapter 6: Camp and Outdoor Programs

The Girl Scout outdoor program is designed to provide girls with a progression of activities. Girls are encouraged to select age-appropriate outdoor activities as part of their broad Girl Scout program. Leaders may work with other trained volunteers to assist them in the delivery of the outdoor program. An outdoor meeting, a hike around a meeting site and backpacking are equally appropriate outdoor activities depending on the age, readiness and skills of the girls.
Camping Opportunities

Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Camps

An overnight camping experience is planned and carried out by a troop and its leaders or by attending a council outdoor event. Troops may camp on Kentucky’s Wilderness Road camp properties which consist of Camp Shawano, Lexington; Camp Richard Clark, Winchester; Camp Judy Layne, Morehead; and Camp Cardinal, Olive Hill. Camping on non-council camps is also a great opportunity to explore our local parks and campsites.

Encampments

Service Units, associations or teen groups sometimes sponsor large group camping experiences. Leaders do not have to have camp training to attend an encampment. Encampments are planned by volunteers and girls. They provide program opportunities as designed by the sponsoring group. Encampments are typically held in the fall and early spring. Encampment sites may be on our camp properties or non-council camp sites.

Resident Camp

Resident camp is a camping experience ranging from three days to two weeks, based on the age of the girl. Participation is by individual girl. Girls from all parts of the council, camp under the guidance of skillfully trained counselors. Girls register individually for selected program themes and participate in activities related to that theme as well as “traditional” Girl Scout camp activities. Resident Camp information is distributed in January.

Summer Day and Evening Programs

A variety of programs are offered in summer at the council camps or a variety of sites within our Council. Programs may be community-based outreach programs designed to introduce or better establish Girl Scouting in a geographic area or volunteer-led programs designed to improve the retention of girls.

Reserving a Camp Site

Reservations must be made at least three weeks in advance. Send your Camping Application with appropriate fees and other necessary forms to the Lexington Service Center. The application, including paid fees, will be returned if not properly completed. You will be emailed a confirmation and checkout sheet, which you must either leave at your campsite or email to the camp department camp@gswrc.org.

Service Unit Encampments and events at council properties that are advertised in the TAP Calendar should send a completed Troop Camp Application with the TAP form, a $50 deposit check and a check for the camp fee when TAP events are due in June.

The Camp Department will begin accepting reservations from leaders for troop camping after September 1 for the new membership year. Troop Camp is first come, first serve. Troop leaders may call the council
to inquire about available dates. The preferred date and camp unit will be held on the camp reservation calendar for 2 weeks. A completed Troop Camp Application must arrive at the council with 2 checks – one for the total camp fee and the other a $50 deposit fee. The deposit will not be cashed and will be returned by the Site Manager when the troop completes the Camp Checkout Procedure-Attendance Report.

**IMPORTANT: Read and understand the policies and standards stated in Safety Activity Checkpoints**

At least one adult who has completed the applicable level(s) of Troop Camp Training must accompany the troop, as well as an adult with current First Aid Certification. For multi-troop encampments or events, there must be at least two adults with applicable level(s) of Troop Camp Training and First Aid certification. Proof of trainings and certifications must be demonstrated to your Service Unit Manager or Membership Specialist. Pools and other high-risk activities require certified facilitators. For information concerning high risk activities contact the Program Director at 859-293-2621. For non-Council agencies/groups, a certificate of Comprehensive General Liability coverage in the amount of $1,000,000 with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Council listed, as additional insured must be submitted with the application. This coverage must include all group participants, members, leaders, etc. Additional insurance must be purchased for all non-registered participants three weeks prior to camping.

Complete the application and send it with the deposit check and camp fee check to the Lexington Service Center, 2277 Executive Drive, Lexington, KY 40505.

The confirmation packet will be emailed and will serve as your official reservation notice. Bring the confirmation and checkout sheet with you to camp. Leave the checkout sheet at your campsite when you leave or email the checkout sheet to camp@gswrc.org

If the campsite chosen is not available, you will be notified and all fees returned. A troop or group can be placed on a waiting list for an available site if desired.

Notify the Camp Director at (859) 293-2621 if you need to cancel your reservation. Refunds will only be given for weather related hazards, sickness or death in the family of the troop, or a three week in advance cancellation.

In the event of a “Weather Advisory” the council reserves the right to cancel the reservation. The council also must follow county wide restrictions such as burn bans.

By signing the application, your group agrees to indemnify Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Council against and hold them free and harmless from any cause and all claims, demands, loss, damage, and expenses including attorney’s fees and other legal expenses arising out of the use of any and all grounds or facilities owned or operated by the Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Council.

Any damage to camp property or equipment will be the responsibility of the group and appropriate charges will be assessed.

Tent Units are open for reservation from April 15 to October 31. Woodview Lodge at Camp Shawano is available year-round depending on weather conditions. All other Units are open April 1st – October 31st or at the discretion of the Property and Camp Managers.
Absolutely no reservations will be taken over the phone!

**Please note:** In order to reserve your Unit you must have 1. Completed Out and About Training or Troop Camp Training, 2. Completed the Camp Application, 3. Complete payments, 4. Safety Deposit Check ($50). Failure to have any of the three items will result in an incomplete application and your reservation.

## Our Camp Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Cardinal</strong></td>
<td>This camp is 156 acres situated on the mountain ridgelines within a short hiking distance to Carter Caves State Park in Carter County, Kentucky that features hiking, programming facilities, caving at Carter Caves and facilities for large groups as well as troops. Both cabins and tents are available at this camp. Overnight capacity is 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Shawano</strong></td>
<td>This camp is 142 acres set on the bluffs above the Kentucky River in Jessamine County, Kentucky. It consists of a variety of camping opportunities from a tent unit to a Large Lodge. The property has large meadows for sports and recreational activities, a climbing tower, an archery range and gaga ball. Overnight capacity is 194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Judy Layne</strong></td>
<td>This camp is 183 acres nestled in the forest of Morgan County, Kentucky near Cave Run Lake and surrounded on three sides by the Daniel Boone National Forest. This camp offers lots of adventure with hiking, swimming pool, zip line, climbing tower, canoeing, challenge course, archery and Cave Run Lake nearby. Both cabins and tents are available at this camp. Overnight capacity is 168.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp Richard Clark</strong></td>
<td>This camp is 110 acres located in Clark County, Kentucky. Perhaps the most historic of all the council’s camp properties. This camp is located where, in the 1850’s, a grand hotel with mineral springs operated as a health spa and attracted many patrons from all over the nation. Limited facilities. Overnight capacity is up to 200.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## GSWRC Policies Related to Camping

- All registered Girl Scout Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior and Ambassador troops/groups may go troop/group camping. The needs and interests of girls and the physical and emotional level of girls should determine the troop/group camping experience. All camping trips require the appropriate level of troop camp training.
- Under the leadership of the troop/group leader, and with the parents/guardians, a Girl Scout Daisy Troop may participate in occasional overnight camping experience in a cabin.
- Each troop/group going overnight camping must be accompanied by a person who has completed the Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Troop Camp Certification or equivalent approved training by the Volunteer Development Director and has knowledge of Safety Activity Checkpoints and Safety Wise. This person must help with the planning and be in attendance during the camping experience.
Troop Camping is not family camping and therefore, tag-alongs should not be part of the troop camp experience. Exceptions for tag-alongs can be made for council events and specifically planned for family participation and day camps providing a special program for tag-alongs. When tag-alongs are part of a special camp event or day camp, non-member activity insurance is required and adults cannot be counted as part of the required girl/adult ratio.

At service unit or council-sponsored camping events, each unit must have a person who has completed Troop Camp Certification. For encampments, where there is not unit cooking or fire building, there must be at least two troop camp trained persons present in camp. Adequately trained personnel must be present at all day camp overnights.

Men cannot supervise girls in sleeping areas of camp or events and therefore, cannot be counted as part of the girl/adult ratio. Separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms must be available for their use.

It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, or designated area). If an adult female shares the sleeping area, there should be two unrelated adult females present.

For high adventure activities on council properties a High Risk Waiver form is required. The form can be found on the council website

Family Camping Events: Family camping events are a wonderful way to get the entire family involved in Girl Scouting and is highly supported. When doing a family camp there are a few things you need to consider:

- During family camping events family units (mother/father/daughter) you may either have the entire family stay in one cabin or tent together or have men sleep in a different tent/cabin unit. Sleeping arrangement details should be clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip.
- If younger siblings or male children are involved, you will need to get tag-a-long insurance.
- All adults must be registered and have a current background check.
- Men may not be considered
  - Males should always have their own designated bathroom and should not have to walk through the girls’ sleeping area to get to the bathroom.
  - If younger siblings are part of the family camping event, the adult responsible for that child cannot be considered part of the girl-adult ratio. Their responsibility is will the younger sibling.
- Infants should not be part of the family camping experience.
Girls and volunteers participate in troops for several months—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 volunteers, and within a reasonable commute (“reasonable” having 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.

Troops provide a flexible way for girls to meet. 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 juvenile detention center to participate in Girl Scout activities

Forming a Troop Committee

You’ll want to involve other adults in the troop. Volunteers will need to register as Girl Scout members, fill out volunteer application forms, complete a background check, 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 network.

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

Your troop committee members might help by:

- Filling in for you
- Arranging meeting places
- Locating volunteers with expertise on a topic of special interest to girls
- Assisting with trips and chaperoning
- Managing troop records

A troop can consist of:

- **Co-Leader/Assistant:** This volunteer assists the troop leader in all responsibilities. Each troop must have at least 1 co-leader/assistant leader
- **Treasurer:** This volunteer opens the checking account; collects and maintains troop dues/monies; and prepares the annual financial report.
- **Cookie Manager** This volunteer runs the troop’s cookie sale for girls to raise funds for the troop.
- **Fall Product Manager:** This volunteer runs the fall sale for girls to raise funds from a limited audience.
- **Troop Camp Trained Adult:** This is a volunteer that accompanies troops/groups on camping trips to ensure proper camping/outdoor cookie procedures are followed and helps prepare the troop to go camping.
- **Trip Chaperone/Transportation** The volunteer you’d look to whenever you need to transport girls for any reason; this person would have volunteers available to drive and chaperone
volunteer you’d look to whenever you need to transport girls for any reason; this person would have volunteers available to drive and chaperone

- **First Aider:** This is a volunteer who has appropriate CPR/First Aid training who accompanies troops on outings and camping trips

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 adult volunteers to partner with you, send them a letter and invite them to their first troop committee meeting.

### Holding Troop Meetings

The sample sessions in the Leadership Journey adult guides will give you ideas about how to plan and hold successful troop meetings. 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 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. 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 chart (a chore chart that lists all the chores and assigns girls’ names to each), so that everyone takes turns at each responsibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

You help each troop member do her part to ensure the meeting and activities 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. 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!

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, 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. 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 some 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 4-6 girls are recommended so that each girl gets a chance to participate and express her opinions. Patrols may be organized by interest or activities that feed into a Take Action project, with each team taking responsibility for some part of the total project; girls may even enjoy coming up with names for their teams.

- **Junior/Cadette/Senior/Ambassador 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. nd 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...
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**Junior/Cadette/Senior/Ambassador:** 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.

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**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 “Safety-Wise” chapter of this handbook.
Looking at a Sample Troop Year

Here is just one example of how you and the girls could set up your troop:

- Hold a parent/guardian meeting.
- Open a checking account, if needed.
- 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 and plan any trip or event.
- Enjoy the full Journey, including its Take Action project.
- Along the way, add in related badges 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.
- 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.
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 nations. Click [here](#) to find out more or to donate to the fund.

Traveling with Girls

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](#). 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** 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.

### Using Journeys and *The Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* in 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](https://www.girlscouts.org) and [Wilderness Inquiries](https://www.girlscouts.org) 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
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Ability to work well as a team
- Skills, interests, and language skills (where applicable)

### 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.

**Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Troop Trip Procedures**

1. All trips and overnights require the completion of the ‘Planning Trips with Girl Scouts’ training. This training is available online.
2. Parent/Guardian Permission Slips are required when activities take place away from the scheduled meeting place, involve overnight travel or focus on sensitive topics.
3. Troops must obtain written permission from the Service Unit Manager, Troop Support team or Program Department (extended trips) for all trips away from their regular meeting place.

For a chart to help you plan your trip and know what forms to use, whose approval is needed and how much time you need for approval check A Guide to Girl Scout Troop Travel found here:

http://www.gskentucky.org/content/dam/girlscouts-gskentucky/documents/TravelForms/6-34%20Guide%20to%20Girl%20Scout%20Troop%20Travel.pdf

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
- Numbers of girls who will be participating (parental permissions must be obtained)
- Names and contact information for the volunteers 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)

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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 whom you’re working.
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 “Safety-Wise” chapter.

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.
**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, discuss the possibility of booking a nonstop flight to make her trip 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**

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.

The end of this trip doesn’t have to be the end of a girls’ time with Girl Scouting. Some girls participate in Girl Scouting in all sorts of ways; others are excited only about travel. What lies ahead for them—and for you?

• Girls who have never been involved in any other way besides travel may be looking for longer-term opportunities closer at home. Younger Cadettes may want to participate in resident camp, while Seniors and Ambassadors—as well as older Cadettes—will want to hear all about upcoming series and events at your council.
• Girls who have traveled once tend to want to travel again. Be sure girls are aware that other travel opportunities, such as Destinations, will exist for them in the years ahead. The great experiences they had on this trip may have prepared them for longer and more global trips in the future.
• Girls may want to hear about the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Awards, which are opportunities for them to make a dramatic difference in their communities—and to have plenty to brag about with college admissions officers, too!

And what about you? If you’re ready for more opportunities to work with girls, be sure to let your council know how you’d like to be a part of girls’ lives in the future. Are you ready for a year-long volunteer opportunity with a troop? Help organize a series or event? Take another trip? The Girl Scouts is a great place for girls 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. Trips should have a purpose and involve girl planning with adult guidance. 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 well and easily
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Ability to work well as a team [Symbol] Interest in adopting new skills, interests, and language skills (where applicable)
Below are examples of different types of Girl Scout trips, listed in order of appropriate progression. Remember, it is not how amazing the trip itself is, but how amazing the girls are, to lead the planning for the trip!

- **Short trips to local points of interest**: 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.
- **Day trips**: An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a daylong trip to a nearby city where you stop at a restaurant for a meal. This allows younger girls to choose location and do much of the planning, while never being too far from home.
- **Overnight trips**: One or possibly two nights away to a Girl Scout camp site, nearby 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**: Lasting over three nights. These include: camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the Mid-Atlantic region.
- **National trips**: Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting three days or more.
- **International trips**: Travel around the world, often requires one or two years of preparation. Visiting one of the four World Centers is a great place to start as is traveling worldwide to do service.
- **GSUSA Getaway**: Prepackaged travel opportunities located in different cities around the country are good opportunities for troops traveling for the first time. For more information go to the GSUSA website: [http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/getaways/](http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/getaways/).
- **GSUSA Destinations**: Special coordinated Girl Scout activities that take place outside the troop (i.e. for individual girls). Travel can be a national or international experience. For more information, go to the GSUSA website: [http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/destinations](http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/take-a-trip/destinations).

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 by doing the work for them. Allow the girls to lead, learn collaboratively, and learn by doing (and by making mistakes). All the while, provide ideas and insight, ask tough questions when needed, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement! 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 is 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?

As you can see, in Girl Scouts girls are always growing more confident and competent. As your girls get older, your role as the adult leader or advisor decreases, and their role increases. Claim Form is needed when emergency medical care is given for filing a claim.
Appendix
Forms are located on the council website.

Troop Financial Forms
- Sales Tax Exemption Certificate
- Detailed Cash Record for Troops
- Troop Dues Record
- Corporate/Individual Contributions to Troops
- ACH Withdrawal Authorization Form
- Money Earning Project Applications
- Checking Account Guidelines and Authorization for Troop Bank Account
- Sponsorship/Partnership Form
- Disbanding Troop Form

Service Unit Financial Forms
- Girl Program Account Report
- Troop Accounts Tracking
- Treasurer’s Report
- Sales Tax Exemption Certificate
- Service Check Registry
Appendix: Volunteer Policies & Procedures

Adopted 2015

Introduction – GSUSA History

Juliette Gordon Low, founder of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), was born October 31, 1860, in Savannah, Georgia. A sensitive and talented youngster, Daisy, as she was known to family and friends, developed what was to become a lifetime interest in the arts. She wrote poems and plays, sketched, acted, and later became a skilled painter and sculptor. Full of inspiration herself, it was her destiny to inspire others. On March 12, 1912, in Savannah, Juliette Low gathered 18 girls together to organize the first two American Girl Guide Troops. Daisy Gordon, her niece, was the first registered member.

The name of the rapidly growing organization was changed to Girl Scouts the next year. Within months, girl members were hiking through the woods in their ankle-length blue uniforms, playing basketball in a curtained-off court, and going on camping trips. The following year saw the opening of a national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and the publication of the first Girl Scout handbook, *How Girls Can Help Their Country*, which featured knot-tying, first-aid and outdoor cooking instructions.

In developing the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, Juliette Low brought girls of all backgrounds into the outdoors, giving them the opportunity to learn about nature and develop self-reliance and resourcefulness. She encouraged girls to prepare themselves not only for traditional homemaking roles, but also for possible future roles in the arts, sciences, business, and for active citizenship outside the home.

At the organization’s founding in 1912, Juliette Gordon Low originated the practice of defying stereotypes. She was a visionary who blazed the way for girls and women to embrace everything life offers. She not only offered girls the opportunities that until then only boys were granted, she opened up those same possibilities to girls of all ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, ability, and geographic groups. Just as it was for Juliette more than 100 years ago, so it is with us today: ensuring all girls in America have access to Girl Scouting is vital. We are the place where over 2.6 million girls go to explore and discover their world, connect with others, and become leaders who take action to make their world a better place.

Now headquartered in New York City, Girl Scouts of the USA is the world’s largest voluntary organization for girls. To date, GSUSA has positively influenced the lives of more than 50 million girls and adult women.
Girl Scout Promise and Law

THE 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.

*The word God can be interpreted in a number of ways, depending on one’s spiritual beliefs. When reciting the Girl Scout Promise, Girl Scout members may replace the word God with a word that more closely expresses their spiritual beliefs.

THE GIRL SCOUT LAW

I will do my best to be:
honest and friendly,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
And responsible for what I do and say.
and to respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scouts.
### GSWRC Culture

GSWRC has defined five cultural attributes to describe the way we expect staff and volunteers within our organization to behave in addition to following the Girl Scout Promise and Law:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Girl-Centric</strong></td>
<td>I believe in the worth and importance of all girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls matter!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serve as cheerleader, expert, and advocate for girls.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invest resources in listening to and understanding girls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create emotional and physical safe spaces where all girls are heard, embraced and valued.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create and defend an environment in which girls will thrive.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contagious Fun</strong></td>
<td>I work with others to promote play for positive growth and development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create opportunities for play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Display enthusiasm for positive teamwork.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain perspective with a sense of humor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Share my passions, aspirations, and talents with others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
<td>I work collaboratively with all people and encourage flexibility in thinking.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remove barriers to access and model inclusive behaviors so that every girl can find her place in Girl Scouting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listen to and value others for who they are and their unique talents.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore new ideas from everyone and everywhere.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offer respect and kindness to all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare girls to live in a multicultural and global world.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intentional</strong></td>
<td>I make decisions based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anchor my decisions in the Promise and Law, Core Purpose, Mission and Vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promote transparent communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to invest in successful initiatives consistent with our strategies and resources while seeking innovative solutions to fill gaps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hold myself accountable to engage in activities and behaviors that contribute to positive outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Integrity | Model professional behavior and attitude.  
I hold myself accountable to our culture through my character and behaviors.  
Trust the good intentions of others and help others to grow and thrive.  
Do the right thing when no one is watching.  
Participate and take ownership in the decision-making process.  
Take responsibility for what I say and do.  
Strive to leave the world better than I found it. |

**Council Relationship to GSUSA Headquarters**

Girl Scout councils have a charter relationship with GSUSA; council employees are not employed by GSUSA. This charter relationship designates each council as a separate, independent legal entity with its own board of directors and staff. Each Girl Scout council has the (independent) authority and accountability for developing Girl Scout membership and for administering and supervising the Girl Scout program within its jurisdiction. The National Board of Directors of Girl Scouts of the USA is accountable to the National Council, from which it receives its authority, for the sound management of Girl Scouting throughout the USA. Individual Girl Scout councils and GSUSA work together to support effectiveness and inclusiveness, ensuring that the experiences of Girl Scouting will remain available for generations of girls to come.

**Volunteer Relationship to GSWRC**

Volunteers are appointed by GSWRC to fulfill roles that impact the mission and vision of the organization. GSWRC’s volunteers are managed in accordance with defined, board approved volunteer policies. The organization strives to develop, retain, and reward volunteers and utilizes coordinators in order to achieve this end. Depending on the role or roles a volunteer is appointed to, the assigned coordinator(s) may be one or more members of staff, service unit team volunteers, or advisory volunteers.
Contact Information

SUPPORT, INFORMATION, AND FEEDBACK

GSWRC’S Membership Team is the first line of contact for all volunteers and members who have questions or comments. The Membership Team may be contacted at 1-800-475-2621, by emailing gswrc@gswrcr.org or in person at one of four service centers. Office hours at all service centers are 8:30 am to 5:00 pm with the shop opened until 7:00 pm on Tuesdays from August – May. From Memorial Day to August, all offices close on Friday’s at 12:30 pm. Our website, www.gskentucky.org also has helpful information and will announce any changes related to support and office openings.

Should you need to meet with a particular member of staff, please schedule an appointment so that we can ensure the staff are available, prepared, and ready to discuss whatever is necessary to meet your needs.

Volunteer Program Philosophy

GSWRC volunteers promote Girl Scouting by providing and administering the Girl Scout program. GSWRC strives to provide volunteer opportunities that increase participation, and broaden experiences. The organization also strives to provide an environment in which volunteers receive support, recognition, and appreciation for jobs well done. The volunteer policies enclosed in this handbook seek to reflect these commitments.

GSWRC will make reasonable efforts to stay abreast of the changing needs of the organization, new legislation, regulations, and trends to ensure that policies and procedures are revised to reflect internal and external changes. The terms specified in the Volunteer Handbook are based on prevailing business conditions and are subject to change based upon business necessity. With the passage of time, it may be necessary to revise, supplement, or rescind policies or portions of these policies.

Volunteer Policies

The following policies apply to all volunteers of GSWRC. Policies provide consistency of action and direction, and they form the basis for an effective volunteer development system.

Affirmative Action

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age (40 or above), disability, national origin, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any legally protected status. GSWRC supports affirmative action in the selection, placement, training, assessment, and reappointment of individuals with disabilities and of persons from groups that are underrepresented ethnically and racially. GSWRC will make reasonable accommodations for physical and mental disabilities of volunteers consistent with the performance of essential responsibilities and the effective operations of the organization.
Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment

Girl Scouts is committed to creating a respectful, courteous environment free of discrimination and unlawful harassment of any kind. GSWRC does not tolerate sexual or other unlawful harassment by any employee, Board Member, volunteer, vendor, contractor, consultant, customer, girl or adult member, or visitor. Harassment is a breach of GSWRC policy and may be a violation of state and/or federal law. In addition to any disciplinary action that GSWRC may take, up to and including dismissal, offenders may also be personally liable for any legal and monetary damages.

Harassment is prohibited in all forms. Harassment can include unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual. Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road maintains a strict policy prohibiting unlawful harassment and discrimination. GSWRC will not tolerate harassing conduct that affects tangible role benefits, that unreasonably interferes with an individual’s role performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. GSWRC is committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent such harassment and discrimination.

GSWRC is determined to resolve possible discrimination and harassment situations as quickly and discreetly as possible. If a volunteer believes another volunteer, Board Member, employee, vendor, contractor, consultant, customer, girl or adult member, visitor, or agent of the organization is harassing or discriminating against her/him, the volunteer is encouraged to tell the offender clearly that the behaviors and actions are unwelcome. The volunteer should immediately inform the Volunteer Development Director (or designee) or the Chief Executive Officer (or designee). If the complaint involves the Chief Executive Officer, then the complaint should be reported to the Board Chair. The volunteer should report the facts of the incident, including what happened, how often, and where the incident(s) took place, as well as the names of the individuals and witnesses involved. Any employee who is informed of, witnesses, or receives a complaint must report it directly to the Volunteer Development Director (or designee) or the Chief Executive Officer (or designee).

All harassment and discrimination claims will be investigated in a timely, fair, and thorough manner, and GSWRC expects all volunteers to cooperate fully in any investigation. All complaints will be investigated as discreetly and confidentially as possible. If the organization finds that discrimination or harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate corrective action up to and including dismissal of the offending volunteer (or other appropriate action if the offender is not a volunteer for the organization).

The Chief Executive Officer has the overall responsibility of maintaining effective enforcement of nondiscrimination and harassment policies. Each volunteer is responsible for following the procedures outlined in this policy to ensure that her/his complaint is handled promptly and appropriately.
Sexual Harassment / Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Sexual harassment of a volunteer (female or male) by anyone (female or male), including any Board Member, coordinator, employee, volunteer, girl or adult member, customer, or vendor will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment may consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical acts of a sexual nature where submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's continued volunteer role; where an appointment decision is based on an individual's acceptance or rejection of such conduct; or where such conduct interferes with an individual's role performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

GSWRC has a firm commitment to providing an environment where all volunteers and girl and adult members are treated with dignity and respect. All volunteers share responsibility and ownership for creating and maintaining a respectful and positive environment.

In accordance with this policy, GSWRC will neither condone nor tolerate:

- any overt display or demonstration of sexual activity between and/or among employed staff or volunteers;
- any overt display or demonstration of sexual activity between employed staff or volunteers and girl members;
- sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between employed staff or volunteers and girl members;
- use of the Girl Scout name, related activities, publications, and/or facilities as vehicles for public or private promotion of sexual orientation and/or practice; and
- infliction of sexually abusive behavior upon girl members, including sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of girl members in pornographic materials.

Sexual harassment also encompasses other actions that create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment. Such actions can include, for example, inappropriate or overtly familiar touching, sexual innuendoes, obscene gestures, and jokes and remarks of a sexual nature, especially where exposure to such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's role performance or ability to complete her/his role.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that undermines the integrity of the volunteer relationship and is incompatible with the values, traditions, and purposes of Girl Scouting as stated in the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the USA.

In addition to sexual harassment, harassment can also consist of unwelcome conduct or the creation of a hostile work environment, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on a person's protected group status. GSWRC maintains an environment that encourages any employed staff member or volunteer who believes that she/he has been the subject of sexual
harassment or any form of harassment as defined in the council's policy to report the incident in writing to either the Chief Executive Officer or human resources. Any employee who is aware of sexual harassment or any form of workplace harassment has a duty to report the matter to the appropriate authority. If the complaint involves the Chief Executive Officer, then the complaint should be reported to the Board Chair.

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road reserves the right to refuse placement or reappointment and to dismiss or suspend from affiliation with GSWRC any volunteer who, in conducting a Girl Scout program, advocates, solicits, or promotes sexuality so as to create substantial risk that such conduct will be detrimental to girl members or to the environment, or involve girl members in matters outside the Girl Scout program.

Further, retaliation against anyone who has reported an allegation of harassment in good faith is expressly prohibited and if it occurs will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**Child Protection Policy**

Because some positions within Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road have direct contact with children, GSCSA supports and maintains environments that are free of child abuse and neglect. All 50 states have passed some form of mandatory child abuse and neglect reporting law in order to qualify for funding under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). CAPTA mandates minimum definitions for child abuse and sexual abuse.

Child abuse or neglect is any recent act or failure to act:

, and to dismiss or to exclude from affiliation with the organization any employee or …resulting in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child’s welfare (the definition of ‘child’ may vary from state to state, but is usually a person under the age of 18).

Sexual abuse is defined as:

...employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

Sexual abuse may also include sexual touching and bodily contact, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and/or involvement of children in pornographic material.
All states require certain professionals and institutions to report suspected child abuse. Failure to report suspected child abuse can result in criminal and/or civil liability. All states require the report to be made to some type of law enforcement authority or child protection agency. Reporting to a parent or relative will not satisfy the reporter’s legal duty under the statutes. A report must also be made to the Chief Executive Officer or designee.

In accordance with these statutes, GSWRC will neither condone nor tolerate:

- infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury upon girl members;
- physical neglect of girl members, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to Girl Scout activities;
- emotional maltreatment of girl members, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.

GSWRC reserves the right to refuse membership volunteer who is found guilty of child abuse or neglect or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect. Local (more stringent) prevailing statutes may supersede Girl Scout policies. A current volunteer who has been convicted or found guilty of child abuse or neglect must report the conviction to her/his coordinator within two days of the conviction’s occurrence.

Volunteers working directly with girls are required to report suspected child abuse according to their state’s reporting law. Volunteers are accountable for protecting the health and safety of program participants. This accountability includes protecting girls and their membership data from exposure to known criminal offenders who may frequently visit the household and/or meeting place of the group.

GSWRC expects that any volunteer who suspects child abuse or neglect will make the required report to that state’s reporting hotline (1-877-597-2331 Kentucky; 1-800-422-4453 in OH).

**Anti-Retaliation Policy**

GSWRC feels very strongly that it is important to provide volunteers with confidential, non-threatening alternatives for registering their concerns without fear of retaliation. GSWRC will not tolerate retaliation against anyone for stepping forward with a concern, complaint, or grievance.

An employee or volunteer may not retaliate against employees or volunteers in any way for registering a concern or complaint in good faith. Retaliation, in the context of this policy, is an employment or appointment action against an employee or volunteer because the employee or volunteer has lodged or supported a complaint. Examples of strictly prohibited retaliatory action include (1) disciplining, changing the role assigned, providing inaccurate information to, or refusing to cooperate or discuss role-related matters with any volunteer because that volunteer has registered a complaint, or (2) intentionally pressuring, falsely denying, lying about, or otherwise covering up or attempting to cover up conduct such as that described above.

Examples of concerns or complaints include, but are not limited to:

- safety concerns (e.g., OSHA complaints);
- unlawful harassment or discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment;
cooperation in a harassment or discrimination investigation

All volunteers are expected to comply with this policy. Should any volunteer act contrary to this anti-retaliation policy, she or he may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Any implication or threat of retaliation because a volunteer has voiced a complaint or grievance should be brought to the immediate attention of the Volunteer Development Director (or designee) or the Chief Executive Officer (or designee).

Substance Abuse

GSWRC is committed to providing a safe environment for all members and to fostering the well-being and health of its employees and volunteers. To enforce that commitment, GSWRC has established a drug-free workplace policy for employees. That commitment is jeopardized when any GSWRC volunteer illegally uses drugs before, during, or after a volunteer shift, possesses, distributes or sells drugs, or abuses alcohol during a volunteer shift. Therefore, the illegal possession or illegal use of any drug is prohibited.

- Any volunteer reporting to their shift visibly impaired will be deemed unable to perform required duties and will not be allowed to complete the shift.
- If possible, the volunteer’s coordinator (or a witnessing coordinator) will first seek another coordinator’s opinion to confirm the volunteer’s status.
- Next, the coordinator will consult privately with the volunteer to determine the cause of the observation, including whether substance abuse has occurred. If, in the opinion of the coordinator, the volunteer is considered impaired, the volunteer will be sent home or to a medical facility by taxi or other safe transportation alternative—depending on the determination of the observed impairment—and accompanied by the coordinator if necessary.
- A volunteer who is impaired or appears to be impaired will not be allowed to drive.

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

GSWRC volunteers have the right to a physically and emotionally safe, harassment-free environment in which everyone can contribute fully. Associated with the right to a physically and emotionally safe, harassment-free environment are certain responsibilities: adherence to GSWRC’s code of conduct, avoidance of conflict of interest, and respect for confidentiality.

**VOLUNTEER CONDUCT**

GSWRC expects and requires honesty, good judgment, and integrity in all interactions. Girl Scouting is founded on faith, trust, and confidence, and holds all volunteers to high standards in personal and professional conduct. Failure to comply with the volunteer code of conduct will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible dismissal from all volunteer roles.

**All GSWRC volunteers must:**

- adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law;
- promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities;
be willing to be playful;
be willing to let girls take the lead;
comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws;
faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts;
deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public;
respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information;
preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties.

The following actions are considered inappropriate for all volunteers:

- failure to adhere to the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law, or any action inconsistent with a position of trust or positive role modeling or influence among girls, parents, other volunteers or the community at large;
- refusal to provide a physically and emotionally safe space, including but not limited to:
  - the use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of girl members,
  - smoking in the presence of girl members,
  - fighting or threatening violence,
  - boisterous or disruptive behavior,
  - violation of Girl Scout safety guidelines,
  - abuse or mistreatment of girls, parents, volunteers, or staff,
  - harassment or discrimination as defined in policies,
  - releasing confidential information,
  - refusal to include girls or adults who have disabilities,
  - discrimination of any kind,
  - the use of rude or disrespectful language when communicating verbally or in writing to girls or adults within the context of Girl Scouting,
  - bullying of girls or adults, including cyberbullying;
- refusal to be playful, refusal to let girls take the lead, or any other action that prevents delivery of high quality Girl Scout programming;
- theft, misappropriation of funds, or misuse of funds, equipment, or materials;
- falsification of records;
- negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of property;
- repeated failure to follow a coordinator’s reasonable requests or carry out a reasonable assignment;
- gross misconduct or insubordination;
- excessive absenteeism without notice.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information learned while serving as a volunteer is the exclusive (intellectual) property of GSWRC and should be carefully guarded. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, non-public technical, business, and financial information and plans, as well as private information about girl and adult members, councils, volunteers, customers, suppliers, and employees. Confidential information must not be disclosed to unauthorized persons, including
competitors, reporters, or other employees whose duties do not require the use of such information.

Only designated individuals are authorized to speak on behalf of GSWRC. All media inquiries should be directed to the Information Marketing Director or the Chief Executive Officer.

Ethics Policy

The realization of the council’s mission and the Council's reputation depend upon the principles of fairness and ethical conduct of all council members, including volunteers. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful compliance with the spirit and letter of all regulations and laws as well as personal commitment to the highest standards of conduct and integrity.

The success of Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road depends upon the trust of all our constituencies. We must preserve that trust. Volunteers have an obligation to act in a way that will always merit the continued trust and confidence of our members and the general public.

GSWRC volunteers will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, GSWRC policies, and community and industry standards. All volunteers must conduct council business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all applicable laws and regulations and refrain from any and all illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

Generally, the use of good judgment will serve as proper guidance. However, if a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action or if a volunteer feels she or he is being pressured to act improperly, the matter must be discussed with the volunteer’s immediate coordinator. If the volunteer is uncomfortable discussing the matter with the immediate coordinator, the volunteer should contact her/his coordinator’s supervisor, the Volunteer Development Director (or designee) or the Chief Executive Officer. The volunteer must take action.

Compliance with this ethics policy is the responsibility of each and every volunteer. Disregarding or failing to comply with this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible dismissal.

Screening and Placement

The recruitment, screening, and placement of volunteer applicants and the reappointment of volunteers shall be based on the individual's knowledge, abilities, skills, experience, education, and/or training. In order to provide equal opportunities to all individuals, volunteer placement decisions at GSWRC are based on performance, qualifications, skills, and abilities. The Girl Scout Council of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road does not discriminate in volunteer opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age (40 or above), disability, national origin, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any characteristic protected by law.
VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS

All prospective volunteers are required to complete the GSWRC volunteer application, including the release of personal information to GSWRC for a criminal records check using one or more third party vendors. Prospective volunteers may be asked to submit character references, employment, and education references.

Volunteer is defined as any adult age 18 or over who wishes to serve GSWRC in a voluntary, non-paid capacity. This includes adults working directly with girls, adults who simply fulfill the adult requirement of the adult/girl ratio by grade level as detailed in Volunteer Essentials and the Safety Activity Checkpoints, and administrative volunteers who handle large amounts of money or confidential information.

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

1. Authorization. Each volunteer applicant will give authorization for GSWRC to obtain a criminal record check. Without such authorization, no applicant will be considered for any volunteer position with GSWRC

2. Criminal Offenses. If GSWRC learns that an applicant or volunteer has been convicted of, has pleaded guilty to, or has pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor or felony, the following shall apply:

   A. For crimes against children, offenses against persons, offenses against the family
   B. crimes involving weapons, arson, any violent crime
   C. Felony drug-related offense, the person will not be allowed to serve in any capacity.
   D. Status as a registered sex offender is cause for automatic disqualification for any volunteer position at GSWRC. Registered sex offenders are not eligible for membership in Girl Scouts of the USA and my not participate in any capacity with Girl Scouts. Any adult living on the premises with a registered sex offender may participate only as parent/guardian.
   E. A first offense DWI (Driving While Intoxicated), DUI (Driving Under the Influence), or possession of marijuana under two ounces will not alone preclude volunteer service, if it has been five years or more since the date of disposition. Other than a first offense occurring five or more years earlier, the person will not be allowed to serve in any capacity
   F. Any person convicted of shoplifting, fraud, false pretense, embezzlement, worthless checks or related offenses will not be allowed to serve in any capacity.
   G. A prospective volunteer who has been convicted of a crime classified as a misdemeanor may appeal the decision of GSWRC and have his or her case reviewed. The decision whether to allow service will be the absolute and exclusive discretion of the CEO and/or designated staff.

3. Pending Charges. If charges are pending related to any criminal offense other than minor traffic violations, involvement with GSWRC as a volunteer will be temporarily suspended pending disposition of the case.
4. **Contest of Criminal Records Check.** Any applicant who disputes and desires to contest any information that appears on the criminal history transcript must do so in the manner described in the pre-adverse action letter, within five days of receipt of said letter. All costs associated with an appeal for the criminal history transcript provided to GSWRC are the responsibility of the individual. Further, it is the responsibility of the individual contesting the transcript, not GSWRC, to take all action necessary to contest or correct the criminal history transcript. GSWRC is entitled to rely upon the information contained in the criminal history transcript until such time as a corrected criminal history transcript has been provided. GSWRC does not control the information that is contained in criminal history transcripts. GSWRC has no liability to any person for the information contained in such transcripts or for its actions taken in reliance upon such.

5. **Continued Service.** As a condition of continued service, each volunteer consents to a periodic review of his or her criminal records. All volunteers will be subject to a new criminal records check, at a minimum, every three to four years.

**PLACEMENT**

Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of the council. In instances where this is not possible, the needs of the council will take precedence over the needs of the individual. Individuals not placed in a position for which they applied may be recommended for other positions. Further, the volunteer may decline an assignment or may request reassignment.

**Compensation Policy**

Volunteers recognize their involvement in the Girl Scout Movement as a voluntary service and generally do not accept, receive, or solicit any monetary reimbursement for their service. Scholarship assistance may be available through GSUSA and GSWRC to help selected adults defray the cost of attendance at Girl Scout courses or special events. National Council Session delegates elected by GSWRC may be provided all or part of the expenses entailed in attending the National Council Session Meetings. Consideration will be given to requests according to the type and cost of the event, the amount budgeted for the fiscal year, and the number of eligible applicants.

**Performance Management Program**

The performance management program is a process to help ensure that goal setting, communication, and evaluations are consistent with the council’s operating objectives. The process depends on a continuous exchange of information between coordinator and volunteer. This shared responsibility provides a consistent means for evaluating performance, and recognizes individuals whose efforts and performance contribute to GSWRC’s overall success.
An annual performance evaluation is an opportunity for the coordinator and volunteer to step back from day-to-day activities and discuss how the volunteer is doing in all aspects of her or his role, to develop ways for the volunteer to maximize her/his potential, and, if appropriate, to plan how to prepare for future responsibilities.

Volunteer Development Policy

The Girl Scout Council of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road recognizes and acknowledges that its volunteers are a critical component of program delivery and is totally committed to recruiting the best people, developing their talent to the fullest extent possible, and recognizing those who meet their goals.

Because developing volunteers is not only about training, GSWRC will deploy a wide range of learning and development opportunities for volunteers that will provide them with the leading-edge skills, knowledge, and expertise to successfully perform their roles and responsibilities and to position GSWRC as a world-class organization.

Finally, GSWRC is aware that coordinators play an instrumental role in the development of volunteers. It is, therefore, fully committed to developing and supporting the staff, service unit team, and advisory volunteers responsible for coordination of various volunteer groups and holding them accountable for selecting, developing, retaining, and rewarding volunteers.

Adult Education Guidelines:

- Volunteers who work directly with girls should complete the required face-to-face prior to meeting with the troop.
- All troop volunteers should complete the Girl Scouting 101 and Troop Essentials within 4 months of assuming active leadership with a troop/group
- Each troop participating in camping must have an adult who has completed Troop Camp training serve as a consultant during the preparation period and be present at all times during the event
- Troop Camp training completed at another Girl Scout council or a Boy Scout council upon request, with documentation of completion and completion of a by-pass exam.
- A person with first aid qualifications must be present at all troop/group activities. Acceptable safety trained volunteers include: licensed physician, EMT, RN, LPS and persons certified in First Aid/CPR from organizations like American Red Cross, American Heart, etc. GSWRC supports Girl Scout volunteers trained to deliver these courses and partners with other agencies to ensure safety courses can be offered to the membership.
- Volunteers completing courses in other Girl Scout councils may request a waiver for courses offered by GSWRC. Approval of the waiver is determined by the course content and is approved by the Volunteer Development Director (or designee)
Accident and Liability Insurance

All registered members are protected under Girl Scout Activity Accident Insurance, basic coverage. This plan provides coverage for:

- Accident medical expenses to members traveling to and from and participating in approved, supervised Girl Scout activities.
- Liability and sickness insurance is required of all troops traveling outside the U.S.A., and is available through GSWRC
- Volunteers receive information about emergency procedures in accordance with their role. The procedures will be followed in the event of a serious accident or fatality.
- Any motor vehicle used to transport Girl Scouts must be duly licensed, insured, safety tested, and operated by a responsible adult (age 18 or older) with a valid driver’s license.
- Kentucky and Ohio law require vehicle insurance
- The organization does not assume responsibility for insuring a volunteer’s personal property.

Outstanding Debt Collection Process

The procedure described below will be used to collect on all non-sufficient funds, checks (NSF), account closed return checks and outstanding nut sale and cookie sale funds due to the Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road. At any time during the collection process, the debtor may terminate the collection action by reimbursing GSWRC all money owed plus fees incurred as part of the collection process.

**Fees:**

- NSF Checks: $25.00 plus the amount owed. The only payment accepted will be cash or a money order
- Small Claims Court: Total amount of the judgment plus filing fee

**Collection Process:**

**Step One:** Phone calls made/work with bank on re-deposit of NSF checks. No response from step one-notice with demand of payment within ten (10) days and intent of legal action. Collection agency begins collection efforts. Positive response ends collection process.

**Step Two:** Filing of charges with courts by Chief of Staff or Product Sales Director. Volunteers, including troop leader with negative judgments, will be removed from their volunteer positions. Parents who owe will be notified that their daughter may not participate in any upcoming product sales. Volunteers progressed past step two that have a positive resolution will be permitted to volunteer but will not be permitted to hold volunteer positions that involve troop funds, service unit and council funds.

Absolute confidentiality must be observed at all times to protect the rights of volunteer(s) and the girl(s)
Other Applicable Policies

GSUSA maintains additional policies which are the responsibility of all Girl Scout members to uphold. These national policies include, but are not limited to:

**Blue Book of Basic Documents** This publication contains all of the basic documents of Girl Scouts of the United States of America. It is the foundation for the work of all Girl Scout councils. This publication is revised by constituents of GSUSA and distributed electronically.

**The Volunteer Essentials Safety-Wise Chapter** Included within Volunteer Essentials, is a chapter on basic safety policy in Girl Scouting. Volunteer Essentials is revised annually by GSUSA and distributed electronically.

**Safety Activity Checkpoints (SACs)** SACs are tailored for each activity girls might participate in, exist for a variety of activities, and must be followed for each activity involving girl members. SACs are revised periodically by GSUSA and distributed electronically.

**GSWRC By-laws** This is the governance document for GSWRC. By-laws are revised by members of the Corporation, approved by the Board of Directors, and distributed electronically or in print by request.

**Program Policies and Standards** GSWRC has established policies which pertain to program, camping and finances. These policies are included in the Volunteer Essentials publication are revised as needed. They may be distributed electronically or in print by request.

Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities

Maintaining a Membership

Kentucky’s Wilderness Road is a membership organization. Therefore, all volunteers are required to become members of Girl Scouts of the USA upon appointment and to renew their membership annually, unless they choose to become a lifetime member. Membership is granted to any person who:

- Meets GSUSA membership standards
- Has paid annual membership dues based on the membership year October 1 through September 30 or is a Lifetime Member
- Abides by GSUSA policies, standards and guidelines as stated in Volunteer Essentials and Safety Activity Checkpoints and the Constitution of GSUSA
- Abides by GSWRC policies, standards and operational procedures

An adult volunteer is defined as anyone who contributes her or his time to GSWRC without compensation or the expectation of compensation beyond reasonable reimbursement of allowance for expenses, or any other thing of value in lieu of compensation.
Appropriate Attire

Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road believes that professional image is critical to the success of our mission and vision. Therefore, volunteers are expected to present a clean, polished appearance when representing the organization, whether they are on council-owned property or in the community. All volunteers are expected to use good judgment in their attire. While working with girls or at a Girl Scout function clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or displays foul language, racist or controversial symbols or words should not be worn.

Volunteers are not required to wear a uniform for participation in most Girl Scout activities. Purchase of a uniform is at the volunteer’s expense and is encouraged. Volunteers are encouraged to wear the Girl Scout Membership Pin when they are not in uniform. Volunteers may be expected to wear a Girl Scout uniform at certain functions; the event coordinator will indicate when this is required.

The GSUSA National Board updated the Girl Scout uniform policy as of October 2008 to reflect the changing needs of our members and transformation of the Girl Scout Movement.

Girl Scouts at each level have one required element (tunic, sash, or vest), for the display of official pins and awards, that will be required when girls participate in ceremonies or officially represent Girl Scouting.

For girls ages 5 to 14, the unifying look includes wearing a choice of a tunic, vest, or sash for displaying official pins and awards, combined with their own solid white shirts and khaki pants or skirts. Girl Scouts in high school can also wear a scarf that ties their look to the sisterhood of Girl Scouts around the world.

For adult members, the unifying look of the uniform is a Girl Scout official scarf, or tie for men, worn with official membership pins, combined with their own navy blue business attire. Girl Scouts at the Daisy and Brownie levels have a full uniform ensemble available.

Communications

Many volunteers are expected to communicate with others in a variety of methods in order to fulfill their role. This may include sending communications via electronic mail and voice mail, discussion groups, and blogs. When representing the organization, content should always be presented in a professional manner and reviewed for correct spelling and grammar, especially when sent to outside or third parties.

While sending communication acting as a representative of the organization, volunteers may not, under any circumstances, transmit offensive, fraudulent, or defamatory images or text, such as pornography or off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as illegally harassing or offensive to others.
Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road recognizes that a positive reputation is critical to supporting its mission and realizing its strategic objectives. As such, all volunteers have an obligation to uphold the Council’s image. This duty and obligation encompasses volunteer Internet postings to both internal and external blogs and other electronic forums in the public domain, including communications prepared and submitted by volunteers when off duty.

GSWRC recognizes that some volunteers may choose to express themselves by posting personal information on the Internet through personal websites, blogs, or chat rooms, by uploading content, or by making comments at other websites or blogs. GSWRC values its volunteers’ creativity and honors their interest in engaging in these forms of personal expression on their own time, should she or he choose to do so. However, problems can arise when a personal posting identifies or appears to be associated with GSWRC or Girl Scouting, or when a personal posting is used in ways that violate the GSWRC’s rights or the rights of other volunteers.

Specifically:

- Public defamation or libel of the Council, its employees, volunteers, and members, whether by name or implication, or dissemination of material contrary to the council’s interests, is not permitted.
- Disclosure of proprietary or confidential information is prohibited.

GSWRC may, at its option, monitor internal and external sources to identify inappropriate use. Volunteers responsible for posting disparaging material or for other misuse will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Volunteer Categories

Girl Scouts has volunteer opportunities for everyone, whether you have a little or a lot of time to give. Every attempt is made to place volunteers in positions that meet both their needs and the needs of the Council. Volunteers must be 18 or older and will receive training for their role. Volunteer opportunities are available for both women and men.

**SERVICE UNIT TEAM VOLUNTEERS**

Service units are teams of volunteers who work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience for the girls in their community through events and other activities.

**TROOP TEAM VOLUNTEERS**

Troop volunteers work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls through service to the girls assigned to their troop. The Team structure allows each volunteer to maximize his or her skills as they pertain to troop leadership.

**OUTDOOR PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS**

Outdoor volunteers work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) for girls through service to the girls and adults in an outdoor setting and adventure programming.
ADVISORY VOLUNTEERS
Advisory volunteers work with council staff to provide development and guidance for volunteers and girls, as well as make recommendations on governance decisions. These volunteers provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls through service in an advisory capacity.

SERIES VOLUNTEERS
Series volunteers work with school or family resource administrators at their assigned school to facilitate a six week Girl Scout program on a specific topic and ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

SHORT TERM VOLUNTEERS
Short term volunteers help with events and other activities occasionally. Short term volunteers may help with one event a year, a monthly activity, or at other times that extra help is needed and the volunteer is available.
Volunteer Position Description

Service Unit Teams

PURPOSE
Service unit teams work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls through service to troop leaders and other volunteers.

TEAM LEADERSHIP
- Service unit teams are led by a volunteer service unit manager
- Service unit managers collaborate with various staff for resources, support, and guidance

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS
- Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
- Be willing to be playful
- Be willing to let girls take the lead
- Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
- Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
- Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
- Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
- Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL SERVICE UNIT TEAM VOLUNTEERS
- Have on file a current (within 4 years), approved GSWRC Volunteer Application and background check
- Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
- Be inclusive of all members of Girl Scouting within the community
- Collaborate with all team members as well as staff, girls, and other volunteers to foster a team environment to reach goals
- Set goals for Girl Scouting in their community in partnership with assigned staff
- Participate in training for the role

QUALIFICATIONS
- Demonstrate a passion for Girl Scouting
- Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
- Ability to be flexible
- Basic computer skills with e-mail access are desired but not required
TERM
Service unit team members are asked to serve for a defined term. Requests for continued service are made based on the volunteer’s desire to continue, performance, and the needs of the Council.

SERVICE UNIT TEAM ROLES

- The following list is an overview of the roles and responsibilities commonly held by service unit teams
- Each role is followed by the general responsibilities for that role
- Service units may have additional roles on their team
- Depending on the number of volunteers participating in the team:
  - Responsibilities within each role may be divided among multiple volunteers
  - Several volunteers may serve in the same role
  - One volunteer may hold multiple roles

Service Unit Manager
Coordinate the goals and work of the service unit team. Plan and lead meetings for volunteers within the service unit

Service Unit Media and Communication
Notify volunteers, girls, and/or parents within the service unit of meetings, activities, and announcements as appropriate. Keeps the community aware of Girl Scout activities

Service Unit Product Sales Manager
Coordinate all aspects of the fall product and/or cookie program for the service unit.

Troop Organizer
Coordinate membership recruitment for both girls and adults in the service unit.

Service Unit Welcome Trainer/Mentor
Serve as a mentor for volunteers in your service unit and provides new volunteers with their introductory course.

Adult Recognitions Coordinator
Ensure that volunteers within your service unit are recognized for their effort and accomplishments.

Service Unit Events Coordinator
Partner with staff to plan events or community activities for girls that include the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Service Unit Treasurer
Manage the service unit bank account. Participate in budgeting for events. Assist troops in setting up their bank accounts.
Volunteer Position Description
Troop Volunteer

PURPOSE
Troop volunteers work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) for girls through service to the girls assigned to their troop. The Team structure allows each volunteer to maximize his or her skills as they pertain to troop leadership.

TROOP LEADERSHIP
- Troops are led by at least two approved volunteers, one of which should take the lead
- Troop volunteers collaborate through their geographic service unit to gain support and resources
- Troop volunteers collaborate with various staff for resources, support, and guidance

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS
- Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
- Be willing to be playful
- Be willing to let girls take the lead
- Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
- Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
- Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
- Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
- Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL TROOP TEAM VOLUNTEERS
- Have on file a current (within 4 years), Volunteer Application and background check.
- Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
- Be inclusive of any girl wishing to join a troop (if troop grade-level & required girl/adult ratio are upheld)
- Collaborate with all volunteers, girls, and parents in the troop, as well as staff
- Partner with girl members of the troop to set goals for the troop’s experience
- Participate in and complete training for specific roles
QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrate a passion for Girl Scouting
- Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
- Ability to be flexible
- Basic computer skills with e-mail access are desired but not required

Troop volunteers are asked to serve for at least one membership year. Requests for continued service are made based on the volunteer’s desire to continue, performance, and the needs of the Council.

TROOP TEAM ROLES

- The following list is an overview of the roles and responsibilities ideal for a team approach to troops
- Depending on the number of volunteers participating in the troop:
  - Responsibilities within each role may be divided among multiple volunteers
  - Several volunteers may serve in the same role
  - One volunteer may hold multiple roles
- Depending on the age, ability, and/or experience of girls in the troop, many responsibilities can and should be a part of the girls’ roles, rather than completed by an adult volunteer (for example, older girls can and should plan their own events and outdoor outings)
- Regardless of how roles are divided within a troop, the required girl/adult ratio must be upheld

Troop Leader

Register the troop; submit dues and registration materials annually. Ensure girls and their families are notified of date, time, and place of meetings and activities. Maintain girl participation records (including, but not limited to, attendance and awards received). Obtain parent permission and council approval for activities and outings, as necessary. Facilitate participation in program quality observations. Maintain communication with the council and disseminate to team members. Coordinate the goals and work of all volunteers within the troop.

Troop Product Sales Manager

Organize and carry out troop product sales, submit monies and reports by deadlines. Receive, organize, and distribute troop program materials, products, payments, and incentives. Educate girls and parents in goal setting, safety, product, ordering, delivery, and responsibility. Maintain contact with troop administrator and service unit product sales manager during the sale. Submit all reports and balance due to the service unit product sales manager by the deadline.

Troop Treasurer

Set up and maintain accurate troop finance records, ensuring one adult unrelated to the treasurer and the service unit manager is also on the troop’s bank account. Submit the Troop Finance Report and other designated paperwork by June 1st each year.
Troop Camp Trained Adult
Coordinate troop/group camping trips to ensure all outdoor activities meet safety requirements. Ensure that all necessary council forms are completed and approved.

Troop Safety Specialist/First Aider
Ensure safety ratios are met for all meeting, activities, and outings. Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for all planned or proposed activities and outings. Serve as the designated first-aider or arrange for another first-aider to be present at all activities and outings. Ensure first aid kit is always present and accessible. Collect and maintain health history records for adult and girl troop members.

Trip Chaperone
Accompany troop on outings as driver or to meet adult/girl safety ratios.

Volunteer Position Description
Outdoor Pathway

PURPOSE
Outdoor volunteers work together to provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) for girls through service to the girls and adults in an outdoor setting.

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS
• Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
• Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
• Be willing to be playful
• Be willing to let girls take the lead
• Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
• Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
• Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
• Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
• Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL OUTDOOR VOLUNTEERS
• Have on file a current (within 3 years), approved GSCSA Volunteer Application
• Be certified in First Aid and CPR
• Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
• Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
• Be inclusive of any girl wishing to participate in outdoor activities
• Collaborate with all volunteers, girls, parents, as well as staff
• Participate in and complete training for specific roles

QUALIFICATIONS
• Demonstrate a passion for Girl Scouting
• Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
• Ability to be flexible
• Basic computer skills with e-mail access are desired but not required
• Background in outdoor education, adventure or camp activities mentioned in the Volunteer Position Description.

TERM
Outdoor volunteers are asked to serve for at least one membership year. Requests for continued service are made based on the volunteer’s desire to continue, performance, and the needs of the Council.

OUTDOOR VOLUNTEER ROLES
• The following list is an overview of the roles and responsibilities available in the Outdoor Pathway
• Depending on the number of volunteers participating:
  o Responsibilities within each role may be divided among multiple volunteers
  o Several volunteers may serve in the same role
  o One volunteer may hold multiple roles

Day Camp Directors
Volunteer run camps include both day and overnight experiences allowing girls to extend their Girl Scout Leadership Experience into the summer months.

Resident Camp Volunteer
Position depends on skills needed, i.e. kitchen help, nurse, adventure, unit, etc. positions designed to provide support for camp staff during a resident camp experience for Brownie to Ambassador girls.

Outdoor Training Facilitator
Facilitate and lead (or co-lead) outdoor training classes for adults and girls (grades 9-12) in Out & About and Troop Camp Certifications (basic outdoor skills and camping), Backpacking, Outdoor Cooking, and more. Facilitators may submit a lesson plan to introduce a new training class.

Adventure Team Volunteers
Deliver adventure challenge activities at council camps and ensure activities are safe, fun and age appropriate.

The adventure team is a group of dedicated volunteers that have taken intensive training to facilitate specific adventure activities.
Volunteer Position Description
Advisory

PURPOSE
Advisory volunteers work with council staff to provide development and guidance for volunteers and girls, as well as make recommendations on operational decisions or in the case of governance volunteers review issues brought forth by the Board of Directors. These volunteers provide a quality Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) for girls through service in an advisory capacity.

ADVISORY VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP
- Advisory volunteer groups may be led by either staff or a volunteer committee chair
- Advisory volunteers collaborate across multiple geographic service units to gain support and resources
- Advisory volunteers collaborate with various staff for resources, support, and guidance

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS
- Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
- Be willing to be playful
- Be willing to let girls take the lead
- Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
- Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
- Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
- Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
- Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL ADVISORY VOLUNTEERS
- Have on file a current (within r years), GSWRC Volunteer Application and Background Check
- Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
- Inclusive of diverse peoples and their cultures
- Desire to help girls and volunteers learn
- Collaborate with various volunteers and staff
- Believe in the positive intent of all volunteers and staff
- Participate in training for the role
QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrate a passion for Girl Scouting
- Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
- Ability to be flexible
- Excellent communication skills (both written and oral)
- Basic computer skills with e-mail access are desired but not required

TERM

Advisory volunteers are asked to serve for a defined term. Requests for continued service are made based on the volunteer’s desire to continue, performance, and the needs of the Council. Additional advisory groups may be formed as the need arises.

ADVISORY VOLUNTEER ROLES

- The following list is an overview of the roles and responsibilities commonly held by advisory volunteers
- Each role is followed by the general responsibilities for that role
- Depending on the number of volunteers participating in the group or committee:
  - Responsibilities within each role may be divided among multiple volunteers
  - Several volunteers may serve in the same role
  - One volunteer may hold multiple roles

Delegate

Promotes interest in the affairs of the council among the general membership and gives direction for Girl Scouting within the council’s jurisdiction.

Service Unit Association Chair

Responsible for running one meeting a year (October) for your service unit association. Meeting will include presentation of awards, selecting of delegates to serve at the Annual Meeting and any policy influencing issues.

Nominating and Awards Committee

Recruit qualified volunteers needed to fill the positions of Cluster Area Chair/Vice Chair, members of the Nominating and Awards Committee and to promote adult recognitions.

Cluster Chair/Vice Chair

Responsible for leading the Nominating and Awards Committee and the Spring Cluster Meeting.

National Council Delegates

Participates in the National Council Meeting representing Kentucky’s Wilderness Road and giving direction on the issues on the national level.

Volunteer Development Committee

Gives input and direction in issues of volunteer recruitment, retention and training.
Volunteer Position Description
Series Volunteers

PURPOSE
Series volunteers work with school or family resource administrators at their assigned school to facilitate a six week Girl Scout program on a specific topic and ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS
- Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
- Be willing to be playful
- Be willing to let girls take the lead
- Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
- Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
- Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
- Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
- Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL SCHOOL CAPTAIN VOLUNTEERS
- Have on file a current (within 4 years), Volunteer Application and background check
- Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
- Be inclusive of any girl wishing to join a troop (if troop grade-level & required girl/adult ratio are upheld)
- Participate in and complete training for the role

QUALIFICATIONS
- Demonstrate a passion for Girl Scouting
- Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
- Ability to be flexible
- Basic computer skills with e-mail access are desired but not required

TERM
Series volunteers may complete one or more six week series within the year. Requests for continued service are made based on the volunteer’s desire to continue, performance, and the needs of the Council.
VOLUNTEER ROLE

The following list is an overview of the roles and responsibilities for a series volunteer:

- Act as a liaison between the school and Girl Scout Council
- Collaborate with your coordinator for resources, support, and guidance to present the program
- As necessary, collaborate with all administrators, volunteers, girls, and parents in the school
- Lead a six week program on a specific topic, including completely a pre-post test with girls
- Provide information to troops about upcoming events and ensuring that girls are given the opportunity to form or move to a troop once the six week program is complete

Volunteer Position Description

Short Term

PURPOSE

Short-term volunteers help with events and other activities occasionally. Short-term volunteers may help with one event a year, a monthly activity, or at other times that extra help is needed and the volunteer is available.

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL GSWRC VOLUNTEERS

- Adhere to the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Promote physical and emotional safety in Girl Scout activities
- Be willing to be playful
- Be willing to let girls take the lead
- Comply with the letter and spirit of all applicable laws
- Faithfully adhere to policies, rules, regulations, and contracts
- Deal honestly, fairly, courteously, and respectfully with girl and adult members, other volunteers, customers, employees, and the general public
- Respect GSWRC’s ownership of all equipment, supplies, records, and proprietary information
- Preserve the confidentiality of all proprietary information, plans, decisions, and any other information that is not designated for knowledge outside of the intended parties
EXPECTATIONS OF ALL SHORT TERM VOLUNTEERS

- Have on file a current (within 4 years), Volunteer Application and Background Check
- Be a registered member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Comply with Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road Policies and Procedures
- Participate in initial organizational information training and in on-site training specific to each volunteer opportunity assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrates a passion for Girl Scouting
- Ability to work in a collaborative fashion
- Ability to be flexible
- E-mail access is required to receive monthly list of service opportunities

TERM

Short-term volunteers do not commit to a term of service and do not participate in an annual review of performance. Short-term volunteers can choose from a list of opportunities and determine which short term projects in which they wish to participate or lead.

EXAMPLE SHORT TERM SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- Assist at special events, such as program activities, encampments, and fundraisers
- Assist in membership recruitment efforts
- Assist with administrative tasks
Volunteer Development

Volunteer Training

ALL VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers complete GSUSA’s Welcome Video and Girl Scouting 101, in addition to training for their specific role. Opportunities for additional training beyond what is required are available upon request.

SERVICE UNIT TEAMS

In addition to the Welcome Video and Girl Scouting 101, service unit team volunteers are expected to complete a session related to their specific position. Additionally, service unit managers meet monthly or quarterly for information, development and feedback.

TROOP TEAMS

In addition to the Welcome Video and Girl Scouting 101, troop volunteers are expected to complete training specific to the role they are fulfilling for the team. Depending on the role, this training may be online or in-person.

OUTDOOR PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

In addition to the Welcome Video, outdoor pathway volunteers may be expected to complete skill-specific training for their volunteer role.

ADVISORY VOLUNTEER TRAINING

In addition to the Welcome Video advisory volunteers are expected to complete the training specific for the advisory role(s) they fulfill.

SERIES VOLUNTEER TRAINING

In addition to the Welcome Video, series volunteers are expected to complete training for the specific program they will be leading.

Progress Reports

Depending on their role, volunteers may be required to complete a progress report. This information will be used to determine future needs of our volunteers and how we can provide better support. The progress reports may include information about the girl processes, outcomes, our culture, and other action items that will inform us of volunteer and girl program successes across the council. The position description will form the basis of the progress report. Volunteers in a position of troop leadership will be asked to complete an Annual Troop Review and a year end Troop Account Summary. Service Unit Managers will be asked to complete a monthly reports on their Service Unit Meetings and a year end report summary of the successes of their service unit.
Coaching Guidelines

There will sometimes be situations in which a volunteer violates policy or may not be performing up to the standards required for her or his position. A performance problem exists when some area of a volunteer’s performance does not meet expectations. The problem can occur either in technical skills, work habits, or conduct.

Once a performance problem or unsatisfactory work situation surfaces, it is important to confront the situation promptly and to seek improvement. A volunteer’s coordinator will address these situations as promptly as possible.

How the situation is handled will depend on the individuals and the issues involved. Sometimes just making a volunteer aware of any concerns is enough. Sometimes the information regarding the situation may not be substantiated without observation of the volunteer’s work. GSWRC reserves the right to observe any volunteer as they work with girls, other volunteers, or community partners by attending troop meetings, service unit meetings, community events and any other relevant activities. When required to bring about improvement, it may be necessary either to follow up with further discussions or to conduct a more formal progressive coaching process.

The following provides the levels available as part of the disciplinary process. These levels are listed in order of increasing severity and may be, but are not required to be, followed in order:

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<tr>
<th>COACHING GUIDELINES</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coaching</strong></td>
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<td>When a performance issue is identified or inappropriate behavior is displayed, it will be brought to the attention of the volunteer as soon as possible. An informal discussion between the coordinator and the volunteer is often sufficient to prompt voluntary corrective action by the volunteer. A summary of the discussion may be given to the volunteer in writing and may be documented in the volunteer records system.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Written Warning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>When a volunteer’s poor performance or behavior necessitates, the coordinator, after consultation with the Volunteer Development Director (or designee), should prepare a written memorandum highlighting any prior coaching and the work performance problem(s) leading to this warning. This written warning should be addressed to the</td>
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volunteer with copies to the next (appropriate) level of management and documented in the volunteer records system.

**Dismissal**

If the volunteer’s work performance continues to deteriorate, an acceptable level of performance is not achieved, or the situation merits, the coordinator should, after consultation with the Volunteer Development Director or designee, prepare a termination letter. The coordinator, in a timeframe worked out with the Volunteer Development Director (or designee), should deliver this termination letter to the volunteer.

If a volunteer chooses to offer a written response to a coaching memo, written warning, or dismissal letter, that response will be documented in the volunteer records system.

Throughout the coaching process, the coordinator should state the nature of the performance or behavior problem, take steps to help the volunteer understand the seriousness of the situation, and cite specific expectations for improvement.

**Conflict Resolution**

GSWRC does not aim to intervene in or take responsibility for conflicts or disagreements between its members. However, some situations require action by GSWRC in order to preserve the integrity of Girl Scouting’s safety and effectiveness. Such situations include, but are not limited to:

- Conflict between two volunteers that creates an unsafe or inappropriate environment for any girl members
- Conflict between two volunteers that creates an environment inconsistent with the Girl Scout Promise or Law
- Conflict between a volunteer and an employee that creates an environment where one or more parties are unable to successfully complete the objectives of their role

In such situations, GSWRC will facilitate a formal conflict resolution meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be the development of a mutually agreeable resolution through discussion in a safe, controlled environment. Formal conflict resolution meetings are an opportunity to move forward, not to find fault or blame. The parties involved in conflict will develop the agreement, focusing on future expectations. If individual performance problems are also present for one or more parties, those problems will be addressed through the coaching process, prior to a formal conflict resolution meeting.
Confidentiality will be of utmost importance in all conflict resolutions. Those called to any conflict resolution by GSWRC will be required to consent to confidentiality. This necessitates that all individuals required for an agreement to be made must be present at the time of the conflict resolution. Further, the only written records retained will be the agreement developed by the parties and a report stating that both parties were present and whether the conflict was settled in whole, in part, or not at all.

The following may result in immediate release of one or more involved parties from any volunteer position with GSWRC:

- Failure to respond to staff requests for information (after reasonable accommodations have been made)
- Refusal to meet with staff (after reasonable accommodations have been made)
- Inability to resolve a conflict which affects girl members

The purpose of conflict resolution is to address interpersonal problems for the organization’s and the volunteer’s mutual benefit.

Volunteer Records

Current volunteers have the right of prior consent regarding information released to external sources, except when information release is required by law. A written release signed by the volunteer will be required prior to release of information unless required by law.

Recognition

GSWRC’s formal recognition system is consistent with GSUSA’s publication of adult recognitions. These recognitions will be approved by the Volunteer Awards Committee, and the Board of Directors as required by GSUSA. GSWRC also honors volunteers with additional cluster, service unit and community recognitions. Complete information about recognitions is published electronically and communicated to volunteers annually.

Reappointment

Prior to the completion of her or his term, each volunteer will receive confirmation of reappointment, appointment to a new position, or dismissal from volunteer service. Reappointment is based on past performance, adherence to GSUSA and GSWRC policy, support of the Girl Scout purpose, values, and GSWRC’s goals, as well as positive relationships with the community, parents, other volunteers, and employed staff. There will be mutual acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and time commitments. Some positions have term limits which prevent volunteers from reappointment to the same position.
Resignation

Either GSWRC or the volunteer may initiate a release from a position. A volunteer is requested to give as much notice as possible when resigning. Upon notice of a volunteer's resignation or intent to resign:

- The resignation submitted will be acknowledged by the volunteer's coordinator.
- Any necessary staff members, volunteers, and parents will be notified, as appropriate.
- The volunteer records system will be updated to include the resignation.

Dismissal

Any action to release a volunteer will receive careful and detailed consideration. Release or resignation from the position does not cancel membership with GSUSA. Reasons for release from a volunteer position may include but are not limited to:

- Restructuring of positions or elimination of the volunteer position in which the individual serves
- Violation of GSUSA and/or GSWRC policy
- Inappropriate conduct
- Illegal substance use/abuse
- Misappropriation or lack of accountability for funds
- Inability or failure to perform or satisfy the requirements of the position
- Unsatisfactory completion of objectives and/or any corrective action
- Membership, performance or activities in organizations whose goals are not compatible with GSUSA
- Failure to respond to staff requests for information or refusal to meet with staff (after reasonable accommodations have been made)

STANDARDS IN RELEASE OF VOLUNTEERS

- No action will be taken on the basis of unsubstantiated information.
- There will be as few people as possible involved in the fact-gathering and decision-making process.
- Prior to release and in situations not involving misappropriation of funds, every effort will be made to either assist the volunteer to improve her/his performance or place the volunteer in another position suited to her/his qualifications.
- In situations not involving the misappropriation of funds, the volunteer will have the opportunity to meet in-person with assigned staff and to present contravening facts as appropriate.
- Volunteers will be given an explanation of why they are no longer considered eligible to continue in their current position.
- When the facts indicate that release is necessary, the volunteer will be given a written letter of release from the position.
- In some cases, the volunteer may be placed in another position, or allowed to continue in other positions, if multiple positions are held at the time of release.
Staff will take reasonable measures to preserve the confidentiality of the parties through the release process but shall have the right to share information with appropriate staff, advisors, and affected volunteers, parents, and girls on a need to know basis.

**Separation Procedure**

As part of the exit processing, all volunteers leaving their service at the Girl Scouts of Kentucky’s Wilderness Road (for any reason) have the option to participate in an exit interview at the time of separation. The exit interview affords an opportunity to discuss such issues as responsibilities to be transferred to another individual, repayment of outstanding debts to GSWRC, and return of property. Suggestions, concerns, and questions should also be voiced. A separating volunteer will be contacted by their coordinator to set up an exit interview.

Volunteers are responsible for all property, equipment, materials, financial or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Volunteers must return all GSWRC property immediately upon request or upon separation. GSWRC may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property. Troop leaders leaving their troop are responsible for ensuring that the bank account and all troop property has been transferred to the next leader and given to the appropriate person to hold until troop leadership is established.

**Grievance Procedure**

A grievance arises when a volunteer feels that the council policies and procedures relating to her/his position are not being properly administered. All volunteer should be free to bring to the attention of those with whom they work any problems or grievances they might have.

**To file a grievance, a volunteer should follow these procedures:**

- Within ten (10) working days of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the grievance, the volunteer should complete a written grievance statement. The statement should include specific reference to and identification of the policies, procedures, or practices that have allegedly been misinterpreted, misapplied, or violated and the resolution sought. The grievance statement should be signed and dated by the volunteer.
- This grievance statement should be sent to the Manager of Membership Services and the Volunteer Development Director. If the grievances involves either the Manager or the Director, then the statement should be issued to the next level of supervision.
- The Manager of Membership Services and the Volunteer Development Director will give a written response, with supporting reasons, to the volunteer and to her immediate coordinator within 10 working days of the receipt of the grievance.
- If the volunteer is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance, she/he sends a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer indicating the desire to continue the grievance procedure. A copy of the original grievance and the disposition should be attached.
- Within 10 working days of the date of receipt, the CEO will review the documentation and issue a written response to the volunteer.
If the grievance is not resolved at this point, the volunteer may request, through the CEO, a hearing before a grievance review team. The grievance review team is appointed by the Council President. The team will include a board member, an operational volunteer and others as designated. This team will investigate the grievance and will issue a written solution to all parties within 20 working days after the grievance review. The decision of this team shall be final.

During this grievance process it is very important that confidentiality is observed to protect the rights of the volunteer(s) and the girls(s). Girl Scout standards require that in order to effectively resolve concerns, we should not gossip or take issues outside the approved processes. While we recognized that all issues may not be resolved to everyone’s satisfaction, the good of the council and the girls’ experiences take precedent over individual egos.
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