



GSSI's
Leader's Guide to Success
2023-2024

**Girl Scouting
builds girls of
courage,
confidence,
and character,
who make the world
a better place.**

girl scouts 
of southwest
indiana

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THANK YOU!

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana – Welcome to Girl Scouts!

Welcome to Girl Scouts!

You're her hero—and ours too! Thanks to you, girls will learn to listen to their hearts, think on their feet, and raise their voices for what they believe in. From all of us at Girl Scouts, thank you for sharing your time and talents as a Girl Scout volunteer!

As a Girl Scout volunteer, you are a community-builder, mentor, champion of fun, and a role model for what it means to lead with your heart. And because of you, Girl Scouts of all ages will have the opportunity to discover that a little imagination can go a long way as they chase their dreams, explore the world around them, take action to improve their communities, and make the world a better place.

No matter where or how you volunteer, you'll make a difference in girls' lives—and this go-to guide will prepare you to effectively lead during your first year as a Girl Scout volunteer. Need help along the way? Let us know! We have various tools, training resources, and people to support you through each step.

You are now a part of our team. We can't wait to see the impact you'll make this year!

The Girl Scout Organization

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

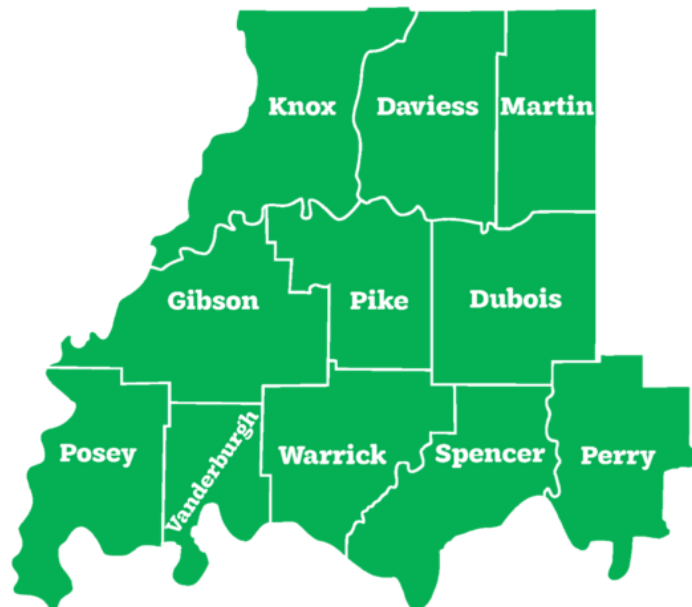
Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. (commonly referred to as GSUSA) is the national organization to which councils belong. Originally founded by Juliette Gordon Low in 1912, GSUSA now serves 2.6 million girls and adults. GSUSA is comprised of 111 Girl Scout councils in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Your Local Council – Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana

Each council has a team dedicated to support the local Girl Scout communities and troops. Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana (GSSI) is the leading organization for leadership development of girls, grades K to 12, in 11 counties of Southwest Indiana.

Geographic Subdivisions

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana's jurisdiction includes the following counties:



Your Local Service Unit

This is your “Go-To” team, composed of volunteers and girl members in an immediate geographic area. GSSI service units are organized by county. Counties with larger populations may consist of two or more service units. Your local service unit is led by experienced individuals who support leaders, troops, and individual members. You may hear from your service unit volunteers regarding events, trainings, cookies, and much more! Make sure to attend service unit meetings throughout the year to get to know your local team and stay informed of service unit sponsored opportunities for your troop.



Your Support Team

Leaders receive support from council staff members and service unit volunteers. Make a note of your support contacts below, as well as your service unit Facebook page where you can connect with local leaders (not available for all service units). Your council support team will share all of this information with you.

My GSSI Support Team: _____

My Local Service Unit: _____

My Service Unit Facebook Page: _____

My Service Unit Mentor: _____

Stay Informed

GSSI sends out a monthly E-Newsletter to parents and volunteers. If you do not receive this newsletter in your inbox, make sure to check your spam folder. You will want to ask your troop parents to watch for this newsletter, as well, so everyone can stay up to date on important council information and girl opportunities. You can find past newsletters [HERE](#).

GSSI Events

Throughout the year, GSSI hosts special events that girls can attend with their family or as a troop (an event will specify if it is a troop-only event). You will receive event notifications through the newsletter and can [view our full event list online](#). Encourage families to attend GSSI events that interest their girls for a well-rounded Girl Scout experience.

Need Assistance?

At GSSI, we want to make sure we can serve all of our members in a timely manner. Your Support Team is the best resource for troop questions and concerns, but they may not always be available to answer your questions immediately. If you need immediate assistance, please contact GSSI's customer care team at (812) 421-4970 or support@girlscouts-gssi.org.

Contact Information:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana, Inc.
5000 E Virginia Street, Suite 2
Evansville, IN 47715

Telephone: (812) 421-4970

Website: www.girlscouts-gssi.org

Email: support@girlscouts-gssi.org

Facebook Page for Council Updates:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana

Facebook Page for Leader Support:

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana Volunteers

For individual council staff contacts,
see "**Our Council**" on the GSSI website.

Girl Scout Office Hours:

Monday-Friday - 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST
Closed on Saturday and Sunday

Girl Scout Shop Hours:

(located at the council office – office is open when shop is closed)

Monday – 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST
Online and pre-orders are accepted Monday through Friday and may be placed online, by email, or by phone for FREE shipping and pick-up.

Special extended hours during February and March during the cookie program. See website for details.

*The council office may, on occasion, be closed unexpectedly, due to uncontrollable factors, such as unusual weather conditions. GSSI will attempt to post closings on the Web sites of local media and on the council Facebook and Web site, www.girlscouts-gssi.org. On days when Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation school (EVSC) closures are announced, the council office will open 1 hour later than normal and may close one hour earlier than normal. On days when EVSC schools are operating on a delay, the council will be open during its normal hours. To verify if the council office is open, call 812-421-4970.



Expectations of Troop Leaders & Adult Volunteers

You—A Girl Scout Leader!

Being a Girl Scout leader is an incredible journey along which you'll shape the future by working with girls today. With your guidance, encouragement, and go-getting spirit, your Girl Scouts will be ready to embark on a lifetime of leadership, success, and adventure. And along the way, you'll hone your own leadership style and discover that you'll achieve more than you thought possible!

In Girl Scouting, leadership is about more than “being in charge” or having a title; it's recognizing that you're a part of a team and understanding that team's needs and interests.

Expectations of Troop Leaders & Adult Volunteers

Troop Co-Leader's Personal Commitment

1. Embrace and be guided in all actions by the Girl Scout Mission and Promise and Law.
2. Serve as an appropriate role model for girls by demonstrating positive attributes such as reliability, respect for others, inclusiveness, dependability, integrity, honest, and taking responsibility for one's own actions.
3. Project and foster a positive attitude and image about Girl Scouts throughout the community.
4. Work in partnership with girls and adults to organize fun, interactive, experiential, girl-led activities that address the girls' interests and needs and that align with the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE).
5. While serving in a Co-Leader capacity, abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages, abusing prescription, over-the-counter, or illegal drugs, and smoking in the presence of girls.

Troop Co-Leader's Commitment to the Girl Scout Troop

1. While developing troop programs, utilize journey books, Volunteer Toolkit, Girl Scout Handbooks, and the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting (Ambassadors)*, customized with additional local experiences. Suggestions can be found online under *Members* on GSSI's website.
2. Maintain ongoing communication with parents/guardians through a variety of tools, including email, phone calls, newsletter, and blogs. Share GSSI's website address with parents/guardians.
3. Conduct ongoing communication and planning sessions with other volunteers in your troop and parents/guardians.
4. Support troop's involvement in the Cookie Program by fulfilling the Co-Leader's responsibilities as prescribed in GSSI Cookie Program materials and training. The Cookie Program is the best financial literacy program for the girls in the country.

5. Ensure the success of Girl Scouts in the registration area/service unit and the council by being positive and supportive of their work; promote and encourage participation in cluster, registration area/service unit, regional, and council wide meetings, events and activities (e.g. service unit meetings, day camp, Cookie Program, council program events).
6. Promote, support, and encourage girls and their parents/guardians in attaining GSSI and GSUSA awards (e.g. Honor Troop, Golden Honor Troop, Bronze/Silver/Gold awards and Journey awards).

Troop Co-Leader's Commitment to GSSI

1. Register as a member of GSUSA.
2. Participate in the background screening process.
3. Keep girls safe by adhering to State and Federal laws and GSUSA and GSSI policies and safety standards.
4. Remain informed about and comply with the policies, procedures, and guidelines of GSUSA and GSSI. More guidance is available in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, *Volunteer Essentials* and *GSSI's Volunteer Resource Guides* found under *Forms and Documents* on the website.
5. Participate in required adult learning opportunities, and as possible, in optional trainings.
6. Regularly read GSSI's electronic newsletters and visit GSSI's website www.girlscouts-gssi.org.
7. Process and complete girls' and other troop adults' registrations and other required membership paperwork according to GSUSA and GSSI's policies and procedures. Complete registration process for new girls and adults within two (2) weeks of their known intent to join the troop.
8. Work with other volunteers and council staff to recruit and welcome girls into the troop throughout the year, striving to maintain a troop of five (5) to thirty (30) girl members as indicated in GSUSA's grade-level guidelines.
9. Encourage troop's families to participate in unique giving opportunities promoted throughout the year. Visit *Support Us* on GSSI's website for more information.
10. Safeguard and manage troop funds according to GSUSA and GSSI policies, standards, and procedures.
 - a. Establish a troop bank account according to GSSI policies and procedures.
 - b. Complete and submit *Troop Financial Report* at the end of the troop year or by May 31.
 - c. Maintain two (2) years of troop's financial records (receipts, bank statements) and make these records available to council staff, upon request.
 - d. Forward financial records to council staff upon leaving the Co-Leader position.

11. Secure endorsement from council staff for high-risk activities, overnight activities, travel outside council jurisdiction, and money-earning projects. The *Special Activities Application* and *Application for Money-Earning Projects* can be found on GSSI's website.
12. Report injuries and/or unusual circumstances/situations that occur during Girl Scout activities to council staff immediately, following the instructions found on the *Emergency Procedures Card*.
13. Retain *Annual Permission Forms* for a minimum of three (3) years after each Girl Scout activity. If an individual is injured, submit the *Annual Permission Form* and *Incident Report* to council staff within 24 hours.
14. With regard to medical and health information for girl members the Co-Leader shall:
 - a. Maintain in confidence and not disclose to any person except for GSSI management team members or third parties who have a legitimate need to know for the health and safety of the individual to whom the information applies (i.e. girl member, co-leader, parent, healthcare provider), or as required by law;
 - b. Use solely for the health and safety of the individual to whom the information applies or as necessary to carry out the duties of the Volunteer's position; and
 - c. Maintain for three (3) years and then dispose of in a secure manner.

GSSI's Commitment to Troop Co-Leader

1. Provide position description/expectations and volunteer personnel guidelines, including affirmative action statement, conflict resolution process, and annual evaluation.
2. Provide efficient customer service throughout the council structure.
3. Provide accurate information regarding council events, activities, policies and procedures, programs, and meetings on a timely basis.
4. Conduct criminal background checks on all troop volunteers who apply for a volunteer position requiring one.
5. Utilize effective and varied tools to ensure effective communication with volunteers.
6. Facilitate and encourage volunteer recognition throughout the council structure.
7. Provide ongoing support, guidance, and learning opportunities to ensure volunteers success in the Girl Scout roles.
8. Provide access to Girl Scout merchandise and supplies through retail shop and online store.
9. Provide liability insurance coverage for approved Girl Scout activities.
10. Facilitate the delivery of GSLE-based programming to girls throughout the GSSI jurisdiction.

All Troop Co-Leaders must sign GSSI's Expectations of a Troop Co-Leader. Volunteers can complete this form online [HERE](#).

Let's Get Started! New Leader Checklist

Your council support team and service unit team will help you through the new leader on-boarding process one step at a time. Use this checklist to keep track of the basic steps you will need to complete to feel confident and prepared to hold your very first troop meeting.

- **Register as an official Girl Scout Volunteer.**
- **Complete a background check through Girl Scouts.**
- **Contact troop parents to introduce yourself.**
 - If you have already secured two co-leaders for your troop, let parents and caregivers know you are in the process of scheduling a parent meeting.
 - If you are the sole leader for your troop, let them know the troop will not be able to form until a second co-leader has been secured. Ask if anyone is interested in co-leading with you and let them know you are in the process of scheduling a parent meeting.
 - You can view your troop roster online through the Volunteer Toolkit. To access the Volunteer Toolkit, go to the GSSI website at www.girlscouts-gssi.org and click the “My GS” tab in the top right corner.
 - Your full email address is your username for the Volunteer Toolkit. If you are unsure of your password, you can reset your password from the login screen.
 - Ask your council support team if there are additional interested families who have not registered yet. Some families prefer to attend a troop parent meeting prior to registering.
- **View your on-boarding training videos.**
 - MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO PARENT MEETING!
- **Set the day, time, and location for your parent meeting .**
 - All parent and troop meetings should be held in a public location such as a school, church, or library. If you need assistance in securing a meeting location, contact your council support team.
 - Contact a staff member at your meeting location and ask if a facility use agreement is required for you to utilize their facility. If it is, fill out the agreement but **DO NOT SIGN IT**. Email the agreement to customer care at support@girlscouts-gssi.org and GSSI will sign the agreement for you and return it to you to submit.
 - Review **GSSI Policies and Standards** that pertain to Meeting Locations located in the Volunteer Resource Guides listed under **Forms and Documents** on GSSI’s website.
- **Once the location for your parent meeting has been approved, notify parents and your troop support staff member.**

- Contact your council support team or service unit mentor if you would like assistance facilitating your parent meeting.
- Your council support team will email you a copy of GSSI's Parent Meeting Guide for Leaders to help you prepare. Make sure you have copies of the following forms for families to complete at this meeting (print forms from the links below or **request for GSSI to print these forms for you**):
 - **Annual Permission Form** (Must be completed annually and kept on you at all times when girls are present.)
 - **Cookie Permission Form** (Found under Permission Forms on the Forms and Documents section of the website. Submit to GSSI annually – retain a copy for your records.)
 - **Ways You Can Help & Vehicle Information Form** (For the leader's reference – found under Permission Forms on the Forms and Documents section of website.)
- **Hold your parent meeting!**
 - Discuss the day, time, and location for troop meetings and complete the facility use agreement for that location. Make sure to send your facility use agreement to customer care at support@girlscouts-gssi.org for GSSI to sign.
 - Let your council support team know when and where your troop will be meeting. We will need this information on file to request a certificate of insurance.
- **Open your troop bank account.**
 - Review procedures for setting up the troop account in **Troop Bank Account Procedures**.
- **Hold your first troop meeting!**

Permission Forms

Parents/Guardians can now grant annual permission for all approved Girl Scout activities through the full membership year with just one form. This means you must keep the Annual Permission Form with you at all times when girls are present, but you do not have to have a separate permission signed for additional activities beyond your troop meetings, excluding Overnights (1 or more nights), Council-Sponsored Events, Camps, Cookie Program, and/or Sensitive Issues. You must be sure this form is kept up-to-date for the entire membership year and you will still be required to have an **Activity Roster** (Troop Activity Forms) for each of your additional activities. For complete guidelines on all permission forms, check out our **A Troop Leader's Guide to Permission Forms**.

ADDITIONAL Permission Forms:

Always check the **Safety Activity Checkpoints** if a troop outing requires a **Special Activities Application** to be completed. All overnights and meetings that involve sensitive issues or topics will require an additional permission to be completed for each girl.

- **Permission for Overnights or Extended Trips**
- **Sensitive Issues – Parent/Guardian Permission Request**

Anytime girls are present, make sure you have their Annual Permission forms on you, a copy of the **Emergency Procedures Card**, and a first aid kit.

- Do not include oral medication such as Tylenol in your first aid kit. If you do need to distribute oral medication to a girl, you must have a signed copy of the **Medication Administration and Emergency Treatment Release Form** from a parent or guardian prior to distribution.



Troop Meeting Overview

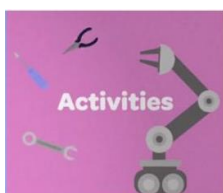
When a new troop forms, review the curriculum for each meeting in advance so you feel comfortable with the material and are aware of any supply preparation that needs to occur such as cutting out materials. Every troop meeting will follow the basic structure outlined below.



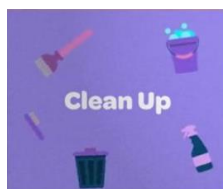
As girls arrive, they will participate in a simple activity on their own or as a group until you are ready for the meeting to start.



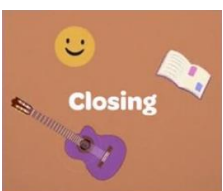
Meetings start by reciting the Girl Scout Promise and Law. While reciting the Promise and Law, make sure to stand and demonstrate the Girl Scout Sign (raising three fingers of the right hand with the thumb holding down the pinky; the three fingers represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise).



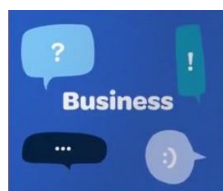
This is the main portion of your troop meeting. Activities implement the Girl Scout Leadership Experience through girl-led opportunities, cooperative learning, and learning by doing.



Part of girl-led means assigning the girls responsibilities throughout the meeting. Engage them in the clean-up process, reminding them that Girl Scouts always leave a place better than they found it.



End your meeting with a favorite Girl Scout song (**Make New Friends** or the **Brownie Smile Song**) and the Friendship Circle. Make New Friends is sung at every level, while the Brownie Smile Song is special to Brownie Girl Scouts. Instructions for the Friendship Circle are found in your first meeting curriculum and in the Girl Scout Tradition section of this manual.



Meet with parents and caregivers for a few minutes after your meeting to share important troop updates such as upcoming troop activities, tasks for the troop committee to complete, discussions regarding troop funds, and other pertinent information.

Sample First Year

With a large variety of badges, Journeys, and awards to choose from, every troop experience is unique based on their girls' interests. However, there are some factors you will want to incorporate annually to provide the best possible Girl Scout Leadership Experience for your girls.

- Host a parent meeting and form/make updates to your parent troop committee prior to your first troop meeting of the membership year.
- Hold troop meetings throughout the membership year.
 - Earn at least four badges (or petals) or one Journey.
 - Participate in two troop outings with your girls (reference **Safety Activity Checkpoints** for guidelines).
 - Engage your girls in the cookie program.
 - Embark on at least one outdoor experience.
 - Challenge your girls with at least one STEM activity.
 - Complete at least one community service project or Take Action project (Take Action projects are part of the Journey experience)
 - Incorporate Girl Scout traditions throughout the year.
- Transition to summer activities.
 - Celebrate a successful year with a year-end party and bridging ceremony (if any girls are moving to the next Girl Scout level).
 - Consider if/when your girls will meet over the summer, may just be one or two outings.
 - Incorporate girl-led planning for the upcoming year.

Your Troop Volunteer Team

It takes a village to lift up the next generation of leaders; you don't have to embark on your troop leader journey alone! Set the stage for a successful troop year by tapping into the people resources already at your fingertips: caregivers and other family members, friends, and members of the community have their own strengths and can provide troops with time, experience, and ideas – so get them involved from the very beginning as part of your troop volunteer team!

Some members of your volunteer team might play more active roles than others – and that's OK! One caregiver in your troop might step up as a dedicated troop treasurer, while others might volunteer to chaperone a field trip. Some roles, especially those that involve handling troop funds and supervising girls, require additional registration and approval. Be sure those volunteers get signed up before they jump into the fun!

A Troop Volunteer Team may be made up of general members or may include specific positions, such as:

- **Troop Co-Leader:** Two adults that help manage the troop. As girls get older, co-leaders begin to guide more than lead to help girls develop skills and confidence to lead like you!
- **Ongoing Troop Volunteer:** This volunteer can be up to as many adults as the troop needs. They play a big role in making the troop run smoothly by assisting with troop meetings, activities, field trips, overnight stays and so much more!
- **Occasional Helping Hand:** This volunteer wants to help but can only once or twice a year generally for a troop meeting or field trip or overnight.
- **Troop Cookie Parent:** This volunteer helps behind the scenes to help handle all the aspects of the Girl Scout Cookie Program with your troop.
- **Troop Treasurer:** This volunteer makes sure the troop's finances are managed properly.
- **Other:** Find out who in your troop has a special talent they can bring and get them on board!

Family Connections: The Key Ingredient to Successful Girl Scout Troops!

You want your Girl Scouts to have fun, be inspired, take risks, and learn about themselves and the world—that's why you're a Girl Scout troop leader or troop volunteer! Parents and caregivers want the same thing for their girls but getting families to pitch in and play an active role in the troop while also enhancing the experience for their girl and themselves can be tricky for many volunteers. It doesn't have to be this way!

Kick the year off right with a Parents and Caregivers Meeting –

A parent and caregiver meeting should be the first meeting you hold to start each troop year – it sets up both new and returning troops for success!

Why? Because it helps:

- Families understand what Girl Scouting can do for their girl.
- Families and leaders identify ways they will work as a team to support the troop.
- Families and leaders agree about what the troop pays for and what families pay for individually.
- You fill key troop positions—you never know which parent will make an awesome assistant leader or troop cookie manager.
- Families know how the troop will communicate things like upcoming events or schedule changes.
- Families learn about uniforms, books, and other important basics.



Setting Up a Troop/Group Website

Troops whose girls meet age criteria (13 years or older) and have parental permission may set up a group Facebook page or website. This site must be approved by GSSI, 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.) Contact us at support@girlscouts-gssi.org with questions.

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 programs 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 made, whether in person or over the Internet.

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, arrange qualified drivers, and ensure:

- Every driver must be an approved adult volunteer (registered and background checked), at least **21** years of age, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girl Scout youth members never drive other members to, from or during activities or field trips.
- 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 **Safety Activity Checkpoints** 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 **Safety Activity Checkpoints** 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.

Review **GSSI Policies and Standards** that pertain to Travel located in the Policies and Standards Guide along with **GSSI's Travel Guide** listed under **Forms and Documents** on GSSI's website.



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.



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.

Girl Scout Age Levels



Girl Scout Daisies (K-1) sparkle with that first-time newness in everything they do. They go on trips, learn about nature and science, and explore the arts and their communities—and so much more. Daisies can also earn learning petals.



Girl Scout Brownies (2-3) work together as they earn badges and explore their communities. Friendship, fun, and age-appropriate activities begin at the Girl Scout Brownie meeting and move out to the community and the wider world. While earning badges, Brownies build skills, learn hobbies, and have fun!



Girl Scout Juniors (4-5) are big-idea thinkers. They're explorers at camp and product designers when they earn their Innovation and Storytelling badges, or even their Bronze Award. Every day, they wake up ready to play a new role.



Girl Scout Cadettes (6-8) chart their own courses and let their curiosity and imagination lead the way. They learn about the power of being a good friend, gain confidence by mentoring younger girls, and can earn their Silver Award.



Girl Scout Seniors (9-10) are ready to take the world by storm, and Girl Scouts gives them countless ways to do it. Their experiences shape their world, while giving them a safe space to be themselves and explore their interests. Seniors can earn their Gold Award and change the world in a tangible, lasting way.



Girl Scout Ambassadors (11-12) know that small acts produce big change. While they get ready for life beyond high school, Girl Scouts helps them take flight. They can also earn their Gold Award and drive lasting impact in their communities.



What Makes a Successful Troop Experience?

No matter where your girls live, a universal Girl Scout experience connects them to their Girl Scout sisters around the country. And there are so many ways to make sure your girls get the full Girl Scout experience in a way that excites and inspires them!



Girl Scout Traditions!

Motto

The Girl Scout motto is "Be prepared." In the 1947 *Girl Scout Handbook*, the motto was explained this way: "A Girl Scout is ready to help out wherever she is needed. Willingness to serve is not enough; you must know how to do the job well, even in an emergency." The same holds true today.

Slogan

The Girl Scout slogan, which has been used since 1912, is "Do a good turn daily." The slogan is a reminder of the many ways girls can contribute positively to the lives of others.

Greeting

Girl Scouts can greet one another with the Girl Scout handshake, used by Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all over the world. The handshake is made by shaking hands with the left hand and making the Girl Scout sign with the right. The left hand is nearest to the heart and signifies friendship.

Friendship Circle

Representing the unbroken chain of friendship among Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world, the Friendship Circle involves Girl Scouts standing in a circle, crossing their right arms over their left, and clasping hands with their friends on both sides. Everyone then makes a silent wish as a friendship squeeze is passed from hand to hand around the circle.

SWAPS

Girl Scouts often make small tokens of friendship to exchange with the Girl Scouts they meet while traveling. These little gifts are called "SWAPS," which stands for "Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere."

Kaper Chart

A chart used to assign kapers (job responsibilities) to girls. Kapers may include leading the Girl Scout Promise and the Pledge of Allegiance, passing out snacks, distributing supplies for an activity, starting the squeeze during a Friendship Circle, etc.

Ceremonies

Girl Scout ceremonies mark special events throughout the year and are most memorable when planned and facilitated by your girls. Participating in a Girl Scout ceremony with your troop helps girls share in Girl Scout history and traditions while creating their own special memories. [View the full list of traditional Girl Scout ceremonies and their descriptions.](#)



Signs, Songs, Handshake, and More!

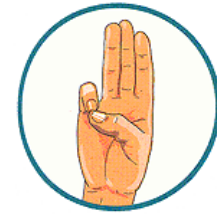
Over time, any organization is going to develop a few common signals that everyone understands. Such is the case with Girl Scouts, which has developed a few unique ways to greet, acknowledge, and communicate, some of which are listed here.

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 also 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 in 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. A variety of songbooks are also available for purchase. Check out the [GSUSA online shop](#).

Celebrate Girl Scout Days!

Throughout the year, girls and adults celebrate some very special days in Girl Scouting!

October 31 – Juliette Gordon Low’s Birthday

The Birthday of Girl Scouts of the USA founder Juliette Gordon Low!

February 22 – World Thinking Day

A day of international friendship – this day is an opportunity to speak out on issues that affect young women, a chance to support girls as they travel internationally, connect with sister Girl Guides, and take action globally!

March – Girl Scout Week

Girl Scout Week always includes March 12th and gives all girls the chance to show their Girl Scout Pride!

Girl Scout week starts Girl Scout Sunday and ends Girl Scout Sabbath Saturday – these days give girls the opportunity to attend their place of worship, if they choose, and be recognized as a Girl Scout.

March 12 – Girl Scout Day

Happy Birthday Girl Scouts! Celebrate the day when Juliette Gordon Low officially registered the organization’s first 18 girl members in Savannah, Georgia in 1912!

April 22 – Girl Scout Leader’s Day

Honors all the volunteers who work as leaders and mentors in partnership with girls – on this day, girls, their families, and communities find special ways to thank their adult Girl Scout volunteers – remember to thank your leaders!



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

What is the Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Girl Scouts prepare for fun, friendship, and new adventures while making the world a better place.

Girl Scouts look at our world and take action to change it for the better. They make friends, challenge themselves with new experiences, write their own stories, and develop the skills and confidence to say, “I know I can do this!”

So how do we do it? It's all part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), and it's what makes Girl Scouting a unique experience for girls.

Girl Scouts is:

Girl-Led

Girl Scouts follow their own lead, no matter their age. From selecting badges they'll pursue to how they'll organize an activity, Girl Scouts have the chance to follow their dreams and grow their skills – and the confidence that comes with that.

Learning by Doing

Hands-on activities are fun for Girl Scouts of any age, but they also help them feel empowered to shape their own experience. Girl Scouts unlock their “I got this” attitude as they discover they can always dust themselves off and try again when things don't go according to plan.

Cooperative Learning

There's power in having a tight-knit group of friends who will learn with you, grow with you, and always cheer you on. Girl Scouts see firsthand that teamwork, respect, and collaboration can fuel them through any challenge that comes their way.

By participating in fun activities through the GSLE, Girl Scouts:



Discover

They'll find out who they are, what they care about, and how to best use their unique talents.



Connect

They'll collaborate with others, both locally and globally, to learn and expand their horizons.



Take Action

They'll do what Girl Scouts always do: make the world a better place.

With the help of supportive adults and troop leaders who help bring these three unique processes to life, girls try new things, share their full selves, and see how good it feels to lead from the heart.

Although girls may start building their leadership skills in school and on sports teams, **research shows** that the courage, confidence, and character they develop as Girl Scouts stay with them for a lifetime!

Here are some helpful tips for incorporating the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:

	What it IS	What it is NOT
Girl-Led	Girls participating in making decisions (eg. Selecting badges and choosing activities).	Adults make all the decisions – regardless of what girls want.
	Adults engage the girls in the decision-making process, as appropriate for their age.	Girls make all the decisions – regardless of adult experience and insight.
Learn –by-Doing	Girls engage in hands-on opportunities and identify the best way to complete a project. Girls work together without adult input at times, allowing them the chance to fail in a safe environment.	Adults do everything because it is faster and more efficient. Adults provide instructions for all activities and ensure that a project is completed perfectly.
	Afterwards, they reflect on what went well, what didn't go well, and what they would change if they wanted to repeat the activity.	Girls participate in multiple activities but do not reflect on what they have learned or how they worked together as a team.
Cooperative Learning	When applicable, girls break into small groups and each group addresses a part of the project. Groups come together and share outcomes with the full troop.	Girls always work in one large group, regardless of the activity.
	Girls listen to ideas and feedback from all troop members when making a group decision.	One girl tells all the others what to do.
	Girls learn a new skill from each other or an adult.	Girls work individually.



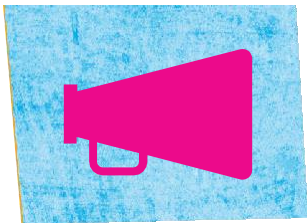
No matter what excites your girls, they'll find engaging and fun activities in the four areas that make up the core of the Girl Scout program. Girl Scout badges help girls develop proficiency skills in the four Girl Scout pillars:



STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
Computer Science, engineering, robotics, outdoor STEM, and more!



Outdoors
Adventure and skill building, from the backyard to the backcountry, including camping experiences for all ages!



Life Skills
Civic engagement, healthy living, global citizenship, communication skills – just to name a few!



Entrepreneurship
The Girl Scout Cookie Program – the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world – teaches goal setting, decision making, money management, business ethics, and people skills!

Whether they complete Girl Scout Leadership Journeys, earn badges, unleash their inner entrepreneur through the Girl Scout Cookie Program, pack for their first hike, change the world through “Take Action” projects, or any combination of these activities, at Girl Scouts, every girl has countless ways to explore our four program areas and hone the skills they'll need to power a lifetime of success – whatever that looks like for them!

National Proficiency Badges

The chart below lists the current badges for the Daisy, Brownie, and Junior levels. New badges have just been released in the areas of Entrepreneurship (Cookie Business and Financial Empowerment), Math in Nature and STEM Career Exploration for all age levels. [Visit for online Badge Explorer](#) to view available badges for every program level and a brief description of each badge. Full badge requirements can be found in CD-AM *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* binder, badge instruction packets, or online through the Volunteer Toolkit.

National Proficiency Badges

Badge Category		Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATH)	Animals	Animal Observer	Pets	Animal Habitats	Animal Helpers	Voice for Animals	
	Automotive Engineering I	Automotive Design	Automotive Design	Automotive Design			
	Automotive Engineering II	Automotive Engineering	Automotive Engineering	Automotive Engineering			
	Automotive Engineering III	Automotive Manufacturing	Automotive Manufacturing	Automotive Manufacturing			
	Coding for Good I	Coding Basics	Coding Basics	Coding Basics	Coding Basics	Coding Basics	Coding Basics
	Coding for Good II	Digital Game Design	Digital Game Design	Digital Game Design	Digital Game Design	Digital Game Design	Digital Game Design
	Coding for Good III	App Development	App Development	App Development	App Development	App Development	App Development
	Cybersecurity I	Cybersecurity Basics	Cybersecurity Basics	Cybersecurity Basics	Cybersecurity Basics	Cybersecurity Basics	Cybersecurity Basics
	Cybersecurity II	Cybersecurity Safeguards	Cybersecurity Safeguards	Cybersecurity Safeguards	Cybersecurity Safeguards	Cybersecurity Safeguards	Cybersecurity Safeguards
	Cybersecurity III	Cybersecurity Investigator	Cybersecurity Investigator	Cybersecurity Investigator	Cybersecurity Investigator	Cybersecurity Investigator	Cybersecurity Investigator
	Digital Arts		Computer Expert	Digital Photographer	Digital Movie Maker	Website Designer	
	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership	Digital Leadership
	Investigation		Senses	Detective	Special Agent	Truth Seeker	
	Math in Nature I	Shapes in Nature	Shapes in Nature	Shapes in Nature			
	Math in Nature II	Numbers in Nature	Numbers in Nature	Numbers in Nature			
	Math in Nature III	Design with Nature	Design with Nature	Design with Nature			
	Mechanical Engineering I	Board Game Design Challenge	Leap Bot Design Challenge	Paddle Boat Design Challenge			
	Mechanical Engineering II	Roller Coaster Design Challenge	Fling Flyer Design Challenge	Crane Design Challenge			
	Mechanical Engineering III	Model Car Design Challenge	Race Car Design Challenge	Balloon Car Design Challenge			
	Robotics I	What Robots Do	Programming Robots	Programming Robots	Programming Robots	Programming Robots	Programming Robots
Robotics II	How Robots Move	Designing Robots	Designing Robots	Designing Robots	Designing Robots	Designing Robots	
Robotics III	Design a Robot	Showcasing Robots	Showcasing Robots	Showcasing Robots	Showcasing Robots	Showcasing Robots	
Science and Technology		Home Scientist	Entertainment Technology	Science of Happiness	Science of Style		
Space Science	Space Science Explorer	Space Science Adventurer	Space Science Investigator	Space Science Researcher	Space Science Expert	Space Science Master	
STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	STEM Career Exploration	
OUTDOORS	Adventure		Letterboxer	Geocacher	Night Owl	Traveler	
	Art in the Outdoors	Outdoor Art Maker	Outdoor Art Creator	Outdoor Art Explorer	Outdoor Art Apprentice	Outdoor Art Expert	Outdoor Art Master
	Environmental Stewardship	Eco Learner	Eco Friend	Eco Camper	Eco Trekker	Eco Explorer	Eco Advocate
	Naturalist		Bugs	Flowers	Trees	Sky	Water
	Outdoor Explorer		Outdoor Adventurer	Horseback Riding	Archery	Paddling	Ultimate Recreation Challenge
	Outdoor		Hiker	Camper	Trailblazing	Adventurer	
	Snow or Climbing Adventure	Daisy Snow or Climbing Adventure	Brownie Snow or Climbing Adventure	Junior Snow or Climbing Adventure	Cadette Snow or Climbing Adventure	Senior Snow or Climbing Adventure	Ambassador Snow or Climbing Adventure
	Trail Adventure	Daisy Trail Adventure	Brownie Trail Adventure	Junior Trail Adventure	Cadette Trail Adventure	Senior Trail Adventure	Ambassador Trail Adventure
	Troop Camping	Buddy Camper	Cabin Camper	Eco Camper	Primitive Camper	Adventure Camper	Survival Camper

Badge Category		Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador	
LIFE SKILLS	Artist				Comic Artist	Collage Artist	Photographer	
	Athlete		Fair Play	Practice with Purpose	Good Sportsmanship	Cross-Training	Coaching	
	Citizen	Good Neighbor	Celebrating Community	Inside Government	Finding Common Ground	Behind the Ballot	Public Policy	
	Civics	Democracy for Daisies	Democracy for Brownies	Democracy for Juniors	Democracy for Cadettes	Democracy for Seniors	Democracy for Ambassadors	
	College Preparation	DAISY PETALS Honest and Fair Friendly and Helpful Considerate and Caring Courageous and Strong Responsible for What I Say and Do Respect Myself and Others Respect Authority Use Resources Wisely Make the World a Better Place Be a Sister to Every Girl Scout					College Knowledge	
	Cook		Snacks	Simple Meals	New Cuisines	Locavore	Dinner Party	
	Craft				Book Artist	Textile Artist		
	Creative Play		Making Games	Playing the Past	Field Day	Game Visionary		
	Do It Yourself		Household Elf	Gardener	Woodworker	Room Makeover		
	First Aid		Brownie First Aid	Junior First Aid	Cadette First Aid	Senior First Aid	Ambassador First Aid	
	Girl Scout Way		Brownie Girl Scout Way	Junior Girl Scout Way	Cadette Girl Scout Way	Senior Girl Scout Way	Ambassador Girl Scout Way	
	Healthy Living		My Best Self	Staying Fit	Eating for You	Women's Health		
	Maker		Art and Design	Art and Design	Art and Design			
			Craft and Tinker	Craft and Tinker	Craft and Tinker			
		Create and Innovate	Create and Innovate	Create and Innovate				
	Manners		Making Friends	Social Butterfly	Netiquette	Business Etiquette		
Performance		Dancer	Musician	Public Speaker	Troupe Performer			
Practical Life Skills		My Great Day	Independence	Babysitter	Car Care			
Storytelling		My Family Story	Scribe	Screenwriter	Novelist			
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	Cookie Business I	My First Cookie Business	My Cookie Customers	My Cookie Team	My Cookie Venture	My Cookie Network	My Cookie Business Resume	
	Cookie Business II	Cookie Goal Setter	Cookie Decision Maker	Cookie Collaborator	Cookie Market Researcher	Cookie Boss	Cookie Influencer	
	Cookie Business III				Cookie Innovator			
	Entrepreneur	Toy Business Designer	Budding Entrepreneur	Business Jumpstart	Business Creator	Business Startup	Entrepreneur Accelerator	
	Financial Wellness	Money Explorer	Budget Builder	Budget Maker	Budget Manager	Savvy Saver	Financial Planner	
	Financial Empowerment	My Money Choices	My Own Budget	My Money Plan	My Money Habits	My Financial Power	My Financial Independence	

Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) offers a variety of helpful leader resources, including pre-planned meeting instructions for all badges and Journeys available at your troop's level! To access the VTK, visit www.girlscouts-gssi.org and click the "MyGS" tab. Your username is your full email address, and you can reset your password from the login screen if needed.

Once you have logged into the VTK, select one of the available year plans or create your own! If you decide to create your own year plan, view a quick summary of the available badges and Journeys for your level on the **Badge Explorer** first to help you narrow down options for the year. Once you have selected your curriculum, add those meetings to the VTK plan.

Jump right into exploring the VTK or contact our Volunteer Training and Support Manager for a tutorial.

- Explore meeting topics and program activities with your girls.
- Print step-by-step activity guides and shopping lists.
- Manage girl attendance and track achievements.
- Add local events.
- Edit troop roster and update contact information.
- Renew members.
- Trace and share financial information.
- Message and share meeting activities with troop families.

...plus so much more! Learn more and access the VTK by logging into MyGS!

National Leadership Journeys & Awards

Every Girl Scout grade level has different Journeys to choose from that include a sustainable Take Action project and all the exploration, discovery, and adventure to power a lifetime of leadership and success!

It's Your World—Change It!

Whether it's planting a garden, painting a mural, or launching a letter-writing campaign, Girl Scouts of all ages experience unique advocacy challenges, complete Take Action projects, and discover what it means to be a leader who makes a difference in the world.

It's Your Planet—Love It!

Girls learn about environmental topics, such as clean water and air, noise pollution, global warming, soil contamination, and agriculture. Each Journey is packed with current environmental information and offers ways to improve life for everyone on the planet through a Take Action project.

It's Your Story—Tell It!

Girls tell their stories through a range of creative approaches. Exploring important themes, such as developing a strong sense of self, navigating healthy relationships, and promoting well-being and confidence in themselves and others, gets girls involved in discussions about thinking critically and ready to complete a Take Action project.

Outdoor STEM: Think Like a Citizen Scientist

Girls make observations and collect data by doing a citizen science project and completing a Take Action project.

Engineering: Think Like an Engineer

Girls discover how to think like an engineer by participating in hands-on design challenges and completing a Take Action project.

Computer Science: Think Like a Programmer

Girls learn how programmers solve problems by participating in computational-thinking activities and completing a Take Action project.

Outdoors

Girls get outside to explore and enjoy nature while completing a sustainable Take Action project. Fun activities ranging from backyard camping to high-adventure exploration build essential outdoor skills and inspire girls to become environmental stewards. Girls earn Outdoor Proficiency Badges while completing this Journey.

The first three Journey categories (It's Your World—Change It!; It's Your Planet—Love It; It's your Story—Tell It) are traditional Girl Scout Journeys. Leaders will help girls navigate the traditional Journeys using hardcopy Journey books. The traditional Journey curriculum is also available online through the Volunteer Toolkit. The Outdoor STEM, Engineering, and Computer Science do not have corresponding Journey books due to their unique structure. Girls earn Outdoor Proficiency Badges while completing the Outdoors Journey. Leaders can access curriculum for these four Journeys online through the Volunteer Toolkit.

National Leadership Journeys

Journey Series	Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
It's Your World—Change It!	Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden	Brownie Quest	Agent of Change	aMAZE!	GIRLtopia	Your Voice, Your World
It's Your Planet—Love It!	Between Earth and Sky	WOW! Wonders of Water	GET MOVING!	Breathe	Sow What?	Justice
It's Your Story—Tell It!	5 Flowers, 4 Stories, 3 Cheers for Animals!	A World of Girls	aMUSE	MEdia	MISSION: SISTERHOOD!	BLISS: Live It! Give It!
Outdoor STEM	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think Like a Citizen Scientist			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like a Citizen Scientist		
Engineering	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think Like an Engineer			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like an Engineer		
Outdoors	Daisy Outdoor Journey	Brownie Outdoor Journey	Junior Outdoor Journey	Cadette Outdoor Journey	Senior Outdoor Journey	Ambassador Outdoor Journey
Computer Science	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think Like a Programmer			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like a Programmer		

Additional Awards for Girls -

- The **Bronze Award** is the highest honor that a Junior Girl Scout can earn. The **Silver Award** is earned at the Cadette level, and the **Gold Award** is earned at the Senior or Ambassador level. These three awards are known as the Girl Scout Highest Awards.
- The Journey Summit Award is earned when a girl completes three of the seven Journeys available at her program level.
- Instructions for the My Promise, My Faith Pin and the Safety Award Pin can be found in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting (Ambassador)* binder or Girl Scout Handbook (Daisy-Senior).
- Instructions for the **Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin** and the **Bridging Awards** can be found online.
- The **Girl Scout Global Action Award** and **World Thinking Day Badge** calls for girls to address the global goals by discovering, connecting, and taking action in their communities and the world.



Additional Awards

Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador	All Girl Scout Levels

Global Awards

Award Category	Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
World Thinking Day Award	World Thinking Day Award 2024					
Global Action Award I	Daisy Global Action Award—Year 1	Brownie Global Action Award—Year 1	Junior Global Action Award—Year 1	Cadette Global Action Award—Year 1	Senior Global Action Award—Year 1	Ambassador Global Action Award—Year 1
Global Action Award II	Daisy Global Action Award—Year 2	Brownie Global Action Award—Year 2	Junior Global Action Award—Year 2	Cadette Global Action Award—Year 2	Senior Global Action Award—Year 2	Ambassador Global Action Award—Year 2
Global Action Award III				Cadette Global Action Award—Year 3		

Honor Troop and Golden Honor Troop

Troops that complete a Journey Award may be eligible to earn Honor or Golden Honor Troop status through GSSI! If you plan to complete a Journey, view the [Honor and Golden Honor Troop requirements](#) at the beginning of the year and incorporate the required Girl Scout Leadership Experience steps into your year plan. If your girls meet all of the requirements by the end of the membership year, complete the [Honor and Golden Honor Patch Application](#) to receive patches for each girl courtesy of GSSI!

GSUSA and GSSI Adult Awards

Every year, GSSI celebrates our exceptional volunteers through national and local award recognition.

GSUSA award nominations are due by February 15 and are reviewed by GSSI’s Adult Recognition Committee and Board of Directors. GSUSA Awards are presented at GSSI’s Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony. View the [full list of GSUSA Awards](#), award descriptions, and instructions for nomination.

GSSI Award nominations are due by April 1 and awards are presented at the May Service Unit meetings. View the [full list of GSSI Awards](#), award descriptions, and instructions for nomination.

Summary of Volunteer Awards

Award	Nomination Form	Letter(s) of endorsement	Approval & Confirmation	Deadline to nominate	When awarded	What/Who
Community	GSSI form	2 nd signature (Service team or staff)	GSSI ARC	April 1	Community mtg or May SU mtg	Certificate/GSSI
Behind the Scenes	GSSI form	2 nd signature (Service team or staff)	GSSI ARC	April 1	May SU mtg	Certificate/GSSI
Innovator	GSSI form	2 nd signature (Service team or staff)	GSSI ARC	April 1	May SU mtg	Certificate/GSSI
Shining Star	GSSI form	2 nd signature (Service team or staff)	GSSI ARC	April 1	May SU mtg	Certificate/GSSI
Rising Star	GSSI form	2 nd signature (Service team or staff)	GSSI ARC	April 1	May SU mtg	Certificate/GSSI
Volunteer of Excellence	GSUSA form	+ One (1) LoE	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Pin/GSSI
Appreciation Pin	GSUSA form	+ two (2) LoE	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Pin/GSSI
Honor Pin	GSUSA form	+ two (2) LoE	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Pin/GSSI
Thanks Badge	GSUSA form	+ three(3) LoE	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Pin/GSSI Plaque/GSSI
Thanks Badge II	GSUSA form	+ three(3) LoE	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Pin/GSSI Plaque/GSSI
President’s Award	GSUSA form	None	GSSI Board of Directors	February 15	GSSI Annual Meeting	Plaque/GSSI
Juliette Gordon Low World Friendship Medal	GSUSA form	+ two (2)	GSUSA Board of Directors	As needed	As appropriate	Medal/GSUSA

Keeping Girls Safe

Girl Scout 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 from GSSI. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls before engaging in activities with Girl Scouts.
2. **Arrange for proper adult supervision of Girl Scouts.** The adult supervision rule at Girl Scouts is a strict standard that requires that whenever girls meet, either in person or virtually, there must be *at least* two registered, screened and approved adult volunteers who are unrelated (for example: not a sibling, spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or anyone who would be considered a family member) and who do not live in the same residence, with a minimum of one who is female. Troop leaders must always be adults. Youth or youth members are not permitted to substitute for adult supervision. This rule applies to every Girl Scout gathering including troop meetings (in person and virtual), day trips, camp, sleep away travel, events, activities, and projects. There are no exceptions to this rule.
3. **Adult-to-Girl Ratios.** There are specific adult-to-girl ratio requirements for Girl Scout troop meetings as compared to events outside of the regular Girl Scout troop meeting, such as outings, activities, camping, and travel. Activities and travel outside of the regular troop meeting require more adult supervision.
4. **Get parent/guardian permission.** Annual Permission Forms are required for Girl Scouts to attend troop meetings and basic troop outings. Topics discussed that could be considered sensitive require an additional Sensitive Issues Permission Form. Overnights and trips require Overnights or Extended Trips Permission Form. All can be found under Forms and Documents on the website.
5. **Report abuse.** Sexual advances, improper touching, and sexual activity of any kind with girl members are forbidden. Physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. Follow GSSI's guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting. These can be found in GSSI's Policies and Procedures found under Forms and Documents on the website.
6. **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 Girl Scouts' families.
7. **Travel safely.** When transporting Girl Scouts to planned 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 is in a legal seat and wears their seat belt at all times and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

8. **Ensure safe overnight outings.** Prepare Girl Scouts 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.
9. **Role-model the right behavior.** Never use illegal drugs. Don't consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of Girl Scouts unless given special permission by your council for group marksmanship activities.
10. **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 Girl Scouts 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.
11. **Ensure that no Girl Scout 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.
12. **Promote online safety.** Instruct Girl Scouts never to put their full names or contact information online or engage in virtual conversation with strangers. Girls should never arrange in-person meetings with online contacts, other than to deliver cookies and only with the approval and accompaniment of a parent or designated adult. On group 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.
13. **Keep Girl Scouts safe during money-earning activities.** Girl Scout cookies and other council-sponsored product programs are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sale, 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 program and efforts.

Safety in Girl Scouting

In Girl Scouting, the emotional and physical safety and well-being of girls is our top priority. Safety Activity Checkpoints outlines the Safety Standards and Guidelines used in Girl Scouting, which apply to all Girl Scout activities.

All volunteers should review the Safety Activity Checkpoints manual when planning activities with girls in order to manage safety and risk in Girl Scout-sanctioned activities.

In addition to reviewing **Safety Activity Checkpoints**, refer to **GSSI Volunteer Resource Guides** for GSSI Policies and Procedures, Troop Volunteers, Camp and Outdoors, and Travel.

In **Safety Activity Checkpoints**, you'll find:

- Girl Scout Activity Safety Standards and Guidelines with requirements for adult supervision, permission slips, preparation, field trips and overnight trips, and other vital information.
- Activities that are not permitted by GSUSA, and actions that girls and volunteers should not take.
- Policies surrounding chartered aircraft trips and aviation.
- First-aid and overall health information you'll need from the girls.
- Standards for well-being and inclusivity, including working with girls with disabilities and ensuring emotional safety.
- A breakdown of specific activities—such as camping, internet use, and water sports—and their individual safety checkpoints.

Following the Safety Standards and Guidelines is an Activity-at-a-Glance chart which details two critical points to keep in mind:

- Age-appropriate activities and participation by grade level.
- Whether prior approval from your council is required before girls participate in a specific activity.

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 GSSI **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 wish to participate in an activity that is not listed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints or is on the list below where exceptions may be allowed.
- **Warning:** The following activities are never allowed for any girl: Bungee Jumping, Flying in privately owned planes, helicopters, or blimps, Hang Gliding, Untethered Hot-Air Ballooning, Hunting, Snowmobiling, Riding a Motorbike, Riding Electric Scooters, Using Outdoor Trampolines, Parachuting or Skydiving, Parasailing, Paintball Tagging, Riding All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's), Stunt Skiing, Zorbing.

Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need

From camping weekends to cookie booths, adult volunteers must always be present to ensure their girls have fun and stay safe, no matter their grade level.

Not sure just how many adults you'll need for your activity? This helpful chart breaks down the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls; GSSI may also establish maximums due to size or cost restrictions, so be sure to check with them as you plan your activity. When working with Girl Scouts in multiple grade levels, reference the required number of volunteers for the youngest grade level present.

NOTE: Anyone who is present with girls, manages troop funds, or has access to private girl information must be a registered member with GSUSA and complete a background check with GSSI. The registration payment goes directly to GSUSA and provides supplemental insurance coverage for girls and adults.

Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need				
	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls:	ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls:	TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls:	ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls:
Daisies Grades K-1	12	1-6	6	1-4
Brownies Grades 2-3	20	1-8	12	1-6
Juniors Grades 4-5	25	1-10	16	1-8
Cadettes Grades 6-8	25	1-12	20	1-10
Seniors Grades 9-10	30	1-15	24	1-12
Ambassadors Grades 11-12	30	1-15	24	1-12

Girl Scout Activities

Parent Permission Forms

Reference the **New Leader Checklist** in this document for complete information on Permission Forms. Review **GSSI Policies and Standards** that pertain to Permission Forms located in the Policies and Standards Guide along with GSSI's Travel Guide and Camp & Outdoor Volunteer Guide listed under **Forms and Documents** on GSSI's website.

Parent Permission Procedures for Girl Scout Activities

Forms are accessible at www.girlscouts-gssi.org.

The parent permission procedure has several components:

- The **Annual Permission Form MY 2024** provides up-to-date emergency contact information. This form is to be updated regularly and covers all Girl Scout activities for the membership year except for Travel or Sensitive Topics, in which an additional permission form must be completed pertaining to the activity.

All overnights and meetings that involve sensitive issues or topics will require an additional permission to be completed for each girl.

- **Permission for Overnights or Extended Trips**
- **Sensitive Issues – Parent/Guardian Permission Request**
- Permission forms must be saved for three years.

Every time a group meets at a time and location different from the regular group meeting, volunteers must have signed Annual Permission Forms on hand for all girls participating—even if the girls are responsible for getting to that location on their own.

For complete guidelines on all permission forms, check out our **A Troop Leader's Guide to Permission Forms**.

Injuries and Parent Permission Forms

An “incident” is any occurrence, including but not limited to accidents, which involves or could potentially involve injury to persons or property or a breach of safety or security. An incident could involve not only Girl Scouts, but also staff, visitors, or volunteers. An **Incident Report** is to be completed by the troop/group leader/event director/staff member and submitted to the council within 24 hours of the incident to support@girlscouts-gssi.org. If the incident involves a girl, the original permission form should be attached. When an emergency center, hospital, or doctor treats a girl, send/bring a copy of the *Annual Permission Form* to the council office. GSSI will retain these in its insurance file.

Always use the current permission form, which is available at www.girlscouts-gssi.org.

Approaching Activities

How can you, as a Girl Scout volunteer, determine whether an activity is safe and appropriate for Girl Scouts? Good judgment and common sense often dictate the answer. What's safe in one circumstance may not be safe in another. An incoming storm, for example, might force you to assess or discontinue an activity.

If you are uncertain about the safety of an activity, call GSSI staff with full details and don't proceed without approval. Remember, the safety of girls is 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. Bear in mind that skill levels decline when people are tired, hungry or under stress. Also use activities as opportunities for building teamwork, which is one of the outcomes for the Connect key in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE).

GSSI Permissions and Certifications

The grid below was designed as a visual supplement to *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, *Volunteer Essentials*, and *GSSI Standards and Policies*. For each type of activity (listed in the left column), the grid indicates the types of documentation and training (if any) that are required prior to the activity. The *Annual Permission Form* and the *Special Activities Application* are under **Forms and Documents** on the website.

GSSI Permissions and Certifications								
Activity	Annual Permission Form	Special Activity Application	Additional Insurance	Overnights, Trips & Travel (On the Go)	Fire Building	Basic Outdoor Cooking	Troop Camp Training Certification	First Aid/CPR Certification
Troop Meeting	†							Recommended 4
Day Field Trip	•	Required if outside GSSI or Unusual Risk						4
Overnight Indoors	√	•	Optional	•				4
Cabin & RV Camping	√	•	Optional	•	Required if Building a Fire	Required if Building a Fire & Cooking Basic Meals	Required if Building a Fire & Cooking Advanced Outdoor Meals	•
Tent & Outdoor Camping	√	•	Optional	Required for Backyard Tent Camping Only	Required if Building a Fire	Required if Building a Fire & Cooking Basic Meals	Required for Outdoor Sleeping Other Than Back Yard	•
Outdoor Cooking or Campfires	•	•			Required for Hot Dogs & Smores	Required for Simple Outdoor Cooking	Required for Advanced Outdoor Cooking	•
Extended Trip²	√	•	Optional	•				•
International Trip²	√	•	•	•				•
Activity With Unusual Risk³	•	•						4

Annual Permission Forms are always required.

• = **required** form/application/training

† For regular meetings in the usual location and at the usual time, the Girl Scout registration is sufficient permission until the Annual Permission Forms are obtained. The lead volunteer must have all the girls' Annual Permission Forms, since this form includes a summary of girls' emergency and medical information.

√ Requires an **Overnight Permission Form** in addition to the Annual Permission Form.

¹Activity insurance is supplemental health insurance. *Basic Plan 1* automatically covers Girl Scout members and non-members, who are invited to participate, and are injured during a Girl Scout sponsored and supervised activity or trip. *Plan 3P – Accident plus Sickness* covers the same as Basic Plan 1 plus sickness, is optional, must be purchased separately, and is intended for extended, long-distance trips. *Plan 3PI – Accident plus Sickness for International Trips* coverage is required for trips outside of the USA and must be purchased separately. You can request Activity Insurance **HERE**.

² An extended trip is defined as a trip lasting more than 3 days and 2 nights and requires *Extended Trip Application*.

³ Activities with Unusual Risk may include (but are not limited to) skating, water activities, horseback riding, and more. Most activities involving over two feet of water require a certified lifeguard and watchers. Examples: wading in a creek, fishing, swimming in the hotel pool or at a leader's house, etc. Specific water activities may have other requirements. See *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and verify with location if they provide certified lifeguards.

⁴ Girl Scouts recommends that at least one adult volunteer in any group be First-Aid/CPR certified. Activities can take place in a variety of locations, which is why first-aid requirements are based on the nature and remoteness of the activity- as noted in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for that activity.

Guidelines for Common Outings

Use this list as a quick reference to prepare for common troop outings. If an outing is in the Special Activity Application Required column, make sure to complete GSSI's Special Activity Application (provided as an **online submission** or as a **hard copy form**) at least four weeks prior to your outing and reference minimum age-requirements and additional safety guidelines for this activity in **Safety Activity Checkpoints**. If you do not see an outing or activity you are considering holding on this list, make sure to review Safety Activity Checkpoints for more information.

<p>Common Simple Outings (Only requires Annual Permission Form *this is not a complete list)</p>	<p>Common High-Risk Outings (Requires a Special Activity Application *this is not a complete list)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touring a local business • Visiting a police station • Visiting a fire station • Trip to the zoo • Hiking at a local park • Bowling • Mini Golf • Outings at local Community Partner facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming • Indoor Trampolines (girls must be in 6 years or older) • Amusement Parks • Parades (note there are strict guidelines for parade floats) • Overnights • Campfires • Day Trip outside of GSSI's geographic area

The following activities are NOT permitted at any Girl Scout level:

- Bungee Jumping
- Flying in privately owned planes, helicopters, or blimps
- Hang-Gliding
- Hunting
- Parachuting or Sky Diving
- Parasailing
- Paintball Tagging
- Riding All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's)
- Riding Motorbikes or Electric Scooters
- Snowmobiling
- Stunt Skiing
- Untethered Hot-Air Balloons
- Using Outdoor Trampolines
- Zorbing

Additional Volunteer Training

The following certifications are required for specific high-risk outings with girls. When a certification is required, there must be at least one registered volunteer present who is currently certified in this area. Please notify your troop support staff member if you or another troop volunteer are interested in completing one of these trainings.

Overnights, Trips & Travel (Previously On the Go)

Overnights, Trips & Travel certification is required to plan and facilitate overnights and trips with indoor sleeping arrangements, and national travel opportunities. This training also certifies volunteers to hold backyard tent camping in a registered volunteer's backyard. Participants will become familiar with council procedures, safety and security issues and helpful hints for traveling with their groups, whether they are camping out or sleeping inside. After reviewing [GSSI's Guide for Travel Volunteers](#), certification is available to complete online at any time [HERE](#).

Fire Building

Fire Building training certifies volunteers to build fires with their troop/group using Girl Scout safety protocols and Leave No Trace principles. This training certifies volunteers to roast hotdogs and marshmallows with the girls, but no additional outdoor cooking methods. Fire Building is primarily offered in conjunction with Basic Outdoor Cooking. However, standalone Fire Building training will be provided per volunteer request. Volunteers may choose to demonstrate fire building proficiency during an in-person training or by completing the digital training and submitting a recording of required outdoor skills. Videos may be submitted to support@girlscouts-gssi.org. The digital training is available online [HERE](#).

Fire Building and Basic Outdoor Cooking

Fire Building and Basic Outdoor Cooking certifies volunteers to build fires AND cook outdoor meals with their troop/group using Girl Scout safety protocols and Leave No Trace principles. The Basic Outdoor Cooking portion teaches volunteers the proper techniques for cooking simple outdoor meals which require cooking equipment and dishwashing. Fire Building and Basic Outdoor Cooking courses are offered several times each year. Volunteers may choose to demonstrate fire building proficiency during an in-person training or by completing the digital training and submitting a recording of required outdoor skills. Videos may be submitted to support@girlscouts-gssi.org. The digital training is available online [HERE](#).

Troop Camp Training

Troop Camp Training certifies volunteers to plan age-appropriate tent camping experiences for their groups. In addition to Troop Camp Training, you will also need certification in Overnights, Trips & Travel (previously On the Go) before holding any overnight camping experiences with your troop/group. This step in the training progression will give you hands-on experience and program ideas to have a successful overnight camping experience. Skills covered will include various outdoor cooking techniques, tent care, minimal impact camping, and much more. Troop Camp Certification courses are offered twice each year, once in the spring and once in the fall. Volunteers may choose to demonstrate troop camping proficiency during an in-person training or by completing the digital training and submitting a recording of required outdoor skills. Videos may be submitted to support@girlscouts-gssi.org. The digital training is available online [HERE](#).

Health Histories

Girl Scout health histories and records may be handled differently by each council. GSSI uses the *Annual Permission Form* to collect health history and parent emergency contact information. Adult volunteers should keep this form with them at all times when involved in a Girl Scout activity. Keep in mind that information contained in a girl's health history is confidential and protected by law, therefore, volunteers shall maintain in confidence and not disclose to any person except GSSI management team members or third parties who have a legitimate need to know for the health and safety of the individual to whom the information applies (i.e. girl members, co-leader, parent, healthcare provider), or as required by law. The medical and health information will be used solely for the health and safety of the individual to whom the information applies or as necessary to carry out the duties of the volunteer's position. *Annual Permission Forms* should be maintained for three (3) years and then disposed of in a secure manner.

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 on the **Medical Administration and Emergency Treatment Release Form**, available on the council website. The form should be completed by the parents, and the form and medication should be given to the first aider.
- 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.

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 premium for the Basic Plan, which provides supplemental medical insurance, is paid for in full by Girl Scouts of the USA.

This insurance provides up to a specified maximum for medical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while a member and non-member is participating in an **approved**, supervised Girl Scout activity. This insurance coverage is **not** intended to diminish the need for, or replace existing, family health insurance.

Basic Plan 1. The Basic Plan 1 automatically covers Girl Scout members and non-members, who are invited to participate, and are injured during the Girl Scout sponsored and supervised activity or trip.

Basic Plan 1 will pay the first \$140.00 of medical expenses plus any out-of-pocket medical expenses that are not covered under the injured person's personal (or family) medical insurance, such as out-of-network charges or large deductibles or ambulatory services.

If the injured person does not have medical insurance, the Basic Plan1 will drop down to cover medical expenses from dollar one.

Note: Most situations within Girl Scouts are covered by the automatic Basic Plan 1 which covers accidental bodily injury. Accidental bodily injury would include exposures like a tick bite or food poisoning, for example, as long as the incident is reported as an accident or incident to your council at the time it occurs.

Plan 3P - Accident plus Sickness: Plan 3P covers the same as Basic Plan 1 plus sickness coverage. Sickness coverage must be purchased separately and is intended as an option for extended, long-distance trips.

Plan 3PI - Accident plus Sickness for International Trips: Plan 3PI coverage is required for international trips. It provides accident plus sickness coverage for trips outside of the USA. The Basic Plan 1 will not cover international trips, so it is necessary to purchase Plan 3PI when taking Girl Scouts on international travel.

International Inbound Accident plus Sickness. Accident plus Sickness coverage for Councils who are hosting Girl Guides/Girl Scouts visiting the United States from out of country.

When planning activities and trips, always consult with your Girl Scout council to see if extra activity accident insurance is needed. You can request Activity Insurance [HERE](#). Review the [Girl Scouts insurance plan](#) description here.

Experts & Facilities

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

- **Does the person have documented training and experience?** She or he should have documented experience for the activity in question, such as course completion certificates or cards, records of previous training to instruct the activity and letters of reference.
- **What does she or he need to be able to do?** This person should have the knowledge and experience to make appropriate judgments concerning participants, equipment, facilities, safety considerations, supervision and procedures for the activity. At the very least, she or he should be able to give clear instructions to girls and volunteers, troubleshoot unexpected scenarios and respond appropriately in an emergency.
- **Does the facility meet safety requirements?** The facility must be inspected and must provide a certificate of insurance at least once per year.
- **Does the facility require a hold-harmless agreement or waiver?** When submitting the Special Activity Application to GSSI, include a copy of the facility's agreement. In some cases, the language used by a provider is not acceptable to GSSI's insurer and further documentation is needed.

What to do if ...

There is an Accident

In the event of any accidents or incidents, fill out an **Incident Report** form immediately and send it to support@girlscouts-gssi.org.

Although you hope the worst never happens, you must observe GSSI 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. GSSI provides an updated wallet card with emergency contact procedures and numbers every year. Keep this card in your wallet, troop first-aid kit, or in your troop binder with the permission forms.

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, GSSI and authorities.

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 above in “What to do if there is an accident”.
- **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 GSSI 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 GSSI. As a partner of GSUSA, American Red Cross offers discounts on certification courses.

Caution. Internet First-Aid/CPR training that is offered online may be necessary due to COVID-19 restrictions. Whenever in-person training is safely authorized, opt for in-person training. In-person opportunities are ideal to practice and receive feedback on life saving techniques. If taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or taking any course that has online components, get approval from your council support team prior to enrolling in the course to ensure you are using a council approved vendor and that an online training is acceptable.

First Aider

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

The **Safety Activity Checkpoints** always tell you when a first aider needs to be present. 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).

Access to EMS	Minimum Level of First Aid
Less than 30 minutes	First Aid
More than 30 minutes	Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR)*

**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.

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](#) (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 found under [Forms and Documents](#) on the website. Girl Scout activity forms, parent consent forms and health histories may also be included.



In the Event of an Emergency

In the event of an emergency:

- Call for appropriate help (911, police, fire or medical).
Always notify police about motor vehicle accidents, serious accidents, or fatalities.
- Administer first aid.
- During business hours, Mon-Fri, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm CST, call 812-421-4970.
After business hours, call 812-484-6806.
- Council staff will immediately arrange for additional assistance at the scene, if needed, and will notify parents/guardians as appropriate.
- Move non-injured persons away from the scene as appropriate.
Keep other girls safe and occupied.
- Assign a responsible adult to remain at the scene.
- Permit no one to disturb victim or surroundings until appropriate authority assumes responsibility.
- Do not share information about the accident with anyone but the police, your council, and authorities.
- If alerting parents/guardians of a situation, updates, pickups, or program changes due to an incident, utilize the off-site adult designated with the Activity Roster to make calls while the on-site adults handle the immediate situation.
- Media: Do not notify or make statements to them.
Refer all inquiries to Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana council.
- Submit an **Incident Report** form according to the instructions on the form to GSSI within 24 hours.



Troop Bank Account Procedures

With your guidance, your Girl Scouts will learn money skills that will serve them throughout their lives. Your Girl Scout troop will plan and finance its own activities, and you'll coach your girls as they earn and manage troop funds. Troop activities are powered by proceeds earned through council-sponsored product program activities (such as the Girl Scout Cookie Program), group money-earning activities (council approved, of course), and any dues your troop may charge.

Remember that all funds collected, raised, earned, or otherwise received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting belong to the troop and must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. Funds are administered through the troop and do not belong to individuals.

Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana, Inc., is ultimately responsible for safeguarding all Girl Scout money in its jurisdiction for the benefit of its member groups (such as troops, registration areas/service units, day camps, travel groups, etc.). All policies and standards of GSSI must be followed. They are found in GSSI Policies and Standards that pertain to Finances located under **Forms and Documents** on GSSI's website. These may be updated periodically.

Troop Bank Account Procedures

Opening Your Troop Bank Account

Troops are required to have two registered, unrelated volunteers as signers on their troop bank account. Both co-leaders may agree to be signers on the account, or you may choose to have one co-leader and a troop treasurer on the account. GSSI recommends setting up your bank account with German American.

Once you have decided which two volunteers will be the account signers and your bank of choice, complete the **Request Troop Checking Account Form** online, and your council support team will prepare the paperwork you need to setup your account. Your council support team will email you the necessary paperwork once it is ready. The two signers will need to take this paperwork to your local branch to open the troop account. Please email your troop account number to your council support team for GSSI's records.

Optional Start-Up Loan

New troops are eligible to receive a \$25 start-up loan from GSSI to assist with first year expenses. Please let your council support team know if you are interested in this loan and which account signer should receive this check. GSSI requests that troops pay back this loan once the troop is financially stable after the first year or two. There is no interest on this loan.

Bank Account Procedures

GSSI recommends purchasing checks for your troop account. If a volunteer decides to purchase troop supplies using personal funds, they may reimburse themselves from the troop account at a later time. Make sure to save receipts so you can verify that the reimbursement was for a troop purchase. Any time you are using a check, make sure that both account signers sign the check. You do not need to purchase special checks that have two signature lines.

Each signer on the account is permitted to request a debit card for the troop account. If you are interested in receiving a debit card, contact your bank and ask them to mail the debit card to your home address. When making troop purchases with a debit card, the debit card owner signs at the point of sale, and the second account signer must sign the copy of the receipt. Each signer must request their own troop debit card as opposed to sharing a single card.

Account signers are not permitted to make cash withdrawals from the troop account.

Changing Signers on Your Troop Bank Account

To update signers on your bank account, complete the **Bank Signers Change Form**. Your council support team will prepare the paperwork to update the account signers, and you will need to take this paperwork to your local branch to complete the update.

Annual Troop Finance Reports

Every membership year, troops complete a **Finance Report** which includes your basic account information, income and expenses, and copies of your monthly bank statements. Troops are required to submit receipts on purchases of \$500 or more with their Finance Report. Please retain receipts for a minimum of three years.

Finance Reports are due annually on May 31. Contact your troop support staff member if you have any questions regarding your Finance Report.

Troops may choose to submit their Finance Report through the Volunteer Toolkit. When doing this, the Volunteer Toolkit will prompt you to enter all income and expenses and upload monthly bank statements. Please complete the first page of the **Finance Report** document along with your Volunteer Toolkit submission to ensure that GSSI has your current account information on file.

Financial Assistance

GSSI offers financial assistance upon request for the following items:

- National Membership (girl or adult)
- Girl Uniforms
- Leader Curriculum Resources
- Resident and Day Camp

If you or a family in your troop is in need of financial assistance, please contact customer care at support@girlscouts-gssi.org to receive our Scoutership Financial Assistance Form. The leader must sign this form before it is submitted to GSSI for review.



Managing Troop Finances

Using a Group Bank Account

- Prior approval must be given by the assigned group treasurer/business manager, for any purchases made by any person acting on behalf of the entity she/he is representing (e.g. the group co-leader, event chair, SUC, day camp director). Keep all receipts with group records to document any disbursements. The council recognizes that groups occasionally receive free supplies. This should be kept to a minimum and supplies should be purchased from local merchants, especially those who have supported Girl Scouts with contributions in the past.
- The best procedure for paying for any purchases is to pay by check or debit card directly to the business or agency providing the service. No purchases above \$10 may be made in cash.
- All checks will have two (2) signatures. Members of the same family cannot be joint signatories on checks. Transactions from a Girl Scout checking account that do not allow two signatures are forbidden, i.e., Internet transfers, ATM, etc., except as allowed below for debit cards.
- Occasionally, situations may arise in which it is not possible to pay by check. In these cases, individuals may make purchases by paying for them with personal funds, and they will be reimbursed by a check from the group treasury.
- Receipts must be presented to the treasurer for reimbursement.
- The treasurer will issue a check for the amount purchased, if the item purchased exceeds \$10. If the amount is less than \$10, payment may be made from petty cash. All checks should be made payable to the payee, never to CASH.
- The treasurer shall retain the receipts with the group financial information. The person being reimbursed will initial the receipts, indicating that he/she has been reimbursed.
- Debit transactions from a group account are permitted as long as these guidelines are followed:
 - Expenses should be pre-approved by the group leadership team.
 - Only one (1) authorized signer is required to sign for the transaction at the point of sale or purchase.
 - Receipts from completed transactions should be directed to the group treasurer, who will review the information.
 - Once the transaction is reviewed, both parties must initial and date the receipt indicating acceptance of the purchase.
 - The treasurer shall retain the receipts with the group financial information.
- A petty cash account of \$25 may be held by the treasurer. Outstanding petty cash transactions should be cleared by the treasurer within one week after the money has

been issued to the purchaser. When the petty cash fund gets low, the treasurer shall write a check to replenish the fund for the total of all receipts turned in.

- Petty cash, up to \$10, may be given, in advance, to a purchaser. When petty cash is issued, the purchaser must:
 - Submit receipts for the amount of the item(s) purchased.
 - Return the change amounting to the difference.
 - Sign the receipts turned in.
- The treasurer should deposit all income received. The treasurer will retain all receipts for all purchases for a minimum of three (3) years after the report is filed.
- As described below in Financial Reporting, reports that detail all income and disbursements should be made regularly. Each report should have copies of monthly bank statements attached.
- The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) can be used to track income and expenses throughout the year, but a detailed register should also be maintained (ex. Excel, MS Money, or GSSI Finance Report) to be submitted with year-end financials.

Group Dues

Experience with group finances can make girls aware that belonging to a group means more than just attending meetings. It means that each member shares in the expenses; that she gives as well as receives; that, together, a group can do many more things than a girl might be able to do by herself.

- Since the money for group activities comes from group dues, council-sponsored product sales, and group money-earning, the money benefits the group. Girl members, with their adult volunteer help, establish their goals for the year and then determine the amount of dues, and set goals for money-earning.
- Be aware of the economic situation of girls' families. Make sure dues are set at a figure everyone can afford. When a girl is unable to pay dues, make sure she is not penalized. Handle any decision with tact so that she is not embarrassed or shamed.
- Explain annual GSUSA membership fees and make a clear distinction between these fees and group dues to both girls and their parents.
- Make it clear to girls that some group activities cost money, while others do not, and discuss costs in relation to plans when the group is making decisions.
- Discuss group plans and equipment needs with the parents so they understand and support them.
- When establishing dues, discuss with girls and parents what will and will not be included (use the list in *What Every Girl Scout Needs*, available from GSSI), along with the program plans the girls have considered. Some expenses that may not be included in dues typically include special activities, camp costs, and personal equipment.

- Parents and co-leaders need to decide whether the parents or the group will buy insignia (badges, pins, etc.). This reduces the amount of funds available for activities. This is an especially important decision for groups that have smaller treasuries.
- Girls should reimburse the group for fees paid by the group for events if girls miss the event or meeting. Parents need to be informed about this guideline at the beginning of the year. Sometimes groups buy expensive tickets to an event and if a girl chooses not to attend at the last minute, the group treasury takes a hit.
- Goals for the Girl Scout Cookie Program should link to activities girls would like to do. This provides incentive for girls to get out and take cookie orders.
- Group activities should match the amount of funds in the group's treasury. When plans are beyond the financial means of the group, parents are often asked to supplement the cost. Sometimes families cannot afford to do this.
- Remember: All groups must leave a minimum \$25 in their group treasury for fall start-up activities. If groups work toward a year-round budget, fall program will be as exciting as the rest of the year and will be an excellent way to recruit new girls to the program.

Financial Reporting

Financial reports (income and expenses) should be prepared and presented, as follows:

- **Registration Area/Service Unit financial reports** should be prepared and presented at regular service unit meetings. Service units should also prepare an end of year **Finance Report** by May 31.
- **Day Camp** - according to day camp guidelines. Contact council staff in charge of day camps for details.
- **Other Committees** give financial reports, when needed and appropriate, at service unit meetings.
- **All Groups (troops, clusters, travel groups, etc.)** should report financial status regularly to their membership and must submit a **Finance Report** by May 31, to their volunteer service team or to the council support team. A detailed list of transactions along with copies of monthly bank statements and receipts of purchases made \$500 or more must be attached.



Troop Disbanding and Unused Troop Fund

When a troop disbands, any unused Girl Scout money left in the account becomes the property of the council. Troop funds are not the property of any individual girl. Before disbanding, ask your girls how they want to pay it forward: they may decide to donate any unused funds to their service unit, to another troop, or to pay for girl activities. Girl activities can include purchasing materials to support another organization through Take Action projects.

Summary: Dispersal of Group Funds

Girl leaves; does not continue in Girl Scouts	No funds move.
Girl moves to another troop	A portion of funds move with the girl.
Troop disbands; girl moves to another troop	A portion of funds move with the girl.
Troop disbands; no girls continue in Girl Scouts	Funds are turned over to GSSI.
Troop merges	Funds merge.
Troop divides into two or more troops	A portion of funds move with the girl.
Troops bridge to new troop	A portion of funds move with the girl.

Disbanded or inactive groups must turn over the treasury GSSI. See **GSSI's Finance and Money Management Policies and Standards** in GSSI's Policies and Standards found under Volunteer Resource Guides.

Closing a Bank Account

Unused Girl Scout money left in accounts when groups disband becomes the property of Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana. Prior to disbanding, the group may decide to donate any unused funds to a worthwhile organization, to another group, or for girl activities. Girl activities can include purchasing materials to support another organization through take-action projects. As when closing a personal account, it is important to be sure that all checks and other debits have cleared the account and all expenses have been paid before you close it and realize you may have to close the account in person. Work with GSSI to return remaining funds to the council.

Money Earning Basics

Review GSSI Policies and Standards that pertain to Money Earning and Service Projects located in the Policies and Standards Guide along with GSSI's Travel Guide listed under **Forms and Documents** on GSSI's website.

Troops flex their financial muscles in two distinct ways:

- **The Girl Scout Cookie Program organized by GSSI.** All girl members are eligible to participate in two council-sponsored product sale activities each year with volunteer supervision: the cookie program and one other council-authorized product sale. GSSI only participates in the Girl Scout Cookie program. Please remember, volunteers and Girl Scout council staff don't sell cookies —girls do. For council specific information, check out the **Cookie section** on girlscouts-gssi.org.
- **Group money-earning activities organized by the troop** (not by GSSI) that are planned and carried out by girls (in partnership with volunteers) and that earn money for the group.

Participation Guidance

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

- Voluntary participation.
- 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 program 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.
- Arrangements for safeguarding the money.

Money-Earning Guidelines

Keep these specific guidelines—some of which are required by the Internal Revenue Service—in mind to ensure that sales are conducted with legal and financial integrity.

- **All rewards earned by girls through the product program 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 are encouraged to participate in council product programs as their primary money-earning activity**; any group money earning shouldn't compete with the Girl Scout Cookie Program or other council product programs.

- **Obtain written approval from GSSI before a group money-earning event.** Complete an **Application for Money Earning** and submit to council at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the project.
- **Girl Scouts discourage the use of games of chance.** Any activity which could be considered a game of chance (raffles, contests, bingo) must be approved by GSSI and be conducted in compliance with all local and state laws.
- **Girl Scouts' Blue Book policy forbids girls from the direct solicitation of cash.** Girls can collect partial payment toward the purchase of a package of Girl Scout Cookies and other Girl Scout-authorized products through participation in council-approved product program donation programs.
- **Girl Scouts forbids product demonstration parties** where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business, such as in-home product parties. Any business using the Girl Scout trademark or other Girl Scout intellectual property must seek authorization from GSUSA.
- **Group money-earning activities need to be suited to the ages and abilities of the girls** and consistent with the principles of the GSLE.
- **Money earned is for Girl Scout activities and is not to be retained by individuals.** Girls can, however, be awarded incentives and/or may earn credits from their Girl Scout product sales. Funds acquired through group money-earning projects must be reported and accounted for by the group according to council procedures.

Additional Guidelines

GSSI's policies and procedures for Troop Money Earning must be followed.

- The best way to earn money for your group is the Cookie Program. Additional money-earning projects must have documented need and be compatible with the Girl Scout mission.
- All money-earning projects must be approved by GSSI prior to the beginning of the project.
- Daisy Girl Scouts may only participate in council-sponsored product sales.
- Groups may not undertake any money-earning activities during the Cookie Program months of February and March.
- Troops seeking extra funds must have participated in the most recent cookie sale. In the case of troops forming after the most recent Cookie Program, they must commit to participating in the next available Cookie Program.
- Additional money-earning activities should be service-oriented projects and cannot be product endorsement or resale.
- Per IRS regulations, money-earning project proceeds must be used for the Girl Scout program listed in the application and benefit all project participants equally.
- Only the council holds non-profit status. A troop or service unit is part of the council, but neither qualifies on its own as a non-profit organization with a unique charitable ID number.

- If you become aware of a funding opportunity involving individual, foundation, or business, please contact the Fund Development Department and they will work with you to secure funding if it is an appropriate action.
- The troop/group leadership must agree to review and follow Safety Standards and Council Guidelines for product sales and money-earning projects as described in **Safety Activity Checkpoints**, **Volunteer Essentials**, and **GSSI Volunteer Resource Guides**.

Sample Money-Earning Activities

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and other council-sponsored product programs are designed to unleash the entrepreneurial potential in your girls. From there, your troop may decide to earn additional funds on its own. Remember: Groups must obtain written approval from GSSI before a group money earning event. Complete an **Application for Money-Earning Project Form** and submit to council at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the project.

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 a high tea or a build-your-own-taco bar, related to activities girls are planning (For instance, if girls are earning money for travel, they could tie the meal to their destination.)

Service(s)

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

Help Your Troop Reach Its Financial Goals

We get it—there's something exciting about opening that first case of Girl Scout Cookies. However, before your Girl Scouts take part in all the cookie program fun, it's important they have a clear plan and purpose for their product sale activities. As a volunteer, you have the opportunity 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? 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 GSSI 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!

Collaborating with Sponsors and Other Organizations

Working with Sponsors and Other Organizations

Local sponsors can help councils power innovative programs for Girl Scouts. 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. Encourage your girls to celebrate a sponsor’s contribution to the troop by sending 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 GSSI’s Fund Development Department, which can give you guidance on the availability of sponsors, recruiting guidelines, and any council policies or practices that must be followed. GSSI may already have relationships with certain organizations or may know of some reasons **not** to collaborate with certain organizations. Troops, groups, and individuals must have permission from GSSI’s Chief Executive Officer before asking organizations, businesses, corporations, foundations, or individuals for grants or financial gifts.

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

Avoid Fundraising for Other Organizations:

Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, you and your group can 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.”

Steer 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.

Be 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.

Avoid Selling or Endorsing Commercial Products:

A commercial product is any product sold at a retail location. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products.

Indiana Sales Tax Information:

A Federal Not-For-Profit ID number is issued to 501(c)(3) corporations like Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana. This is not an Indiana Sales Tax exempt number. According to state guidelines, troops/groups are not eligible to use the Indiana Sales Tax Exempt Number.





THANK YOU!

**Because of you,
we can continue our mission to build girls
of courage, confidence, and character
who make the world a better place!**

Questions?
Contact our
Customer Care Team at
support@girlscouts-gssi.org
or (812) 421-4970.

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