



# A Field Guide to Inclusivity

Empowering volunteers to build safe, equitable, and girl-led spaces

# Agenda

1. The Foundation: An Inclusive Mindset
2. Consult
3. Communicate
4. Create
5. Adapt
6. Safety & Risks
7. Resources

# Building an Inclusive Mindset

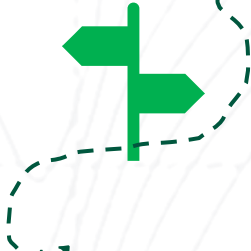
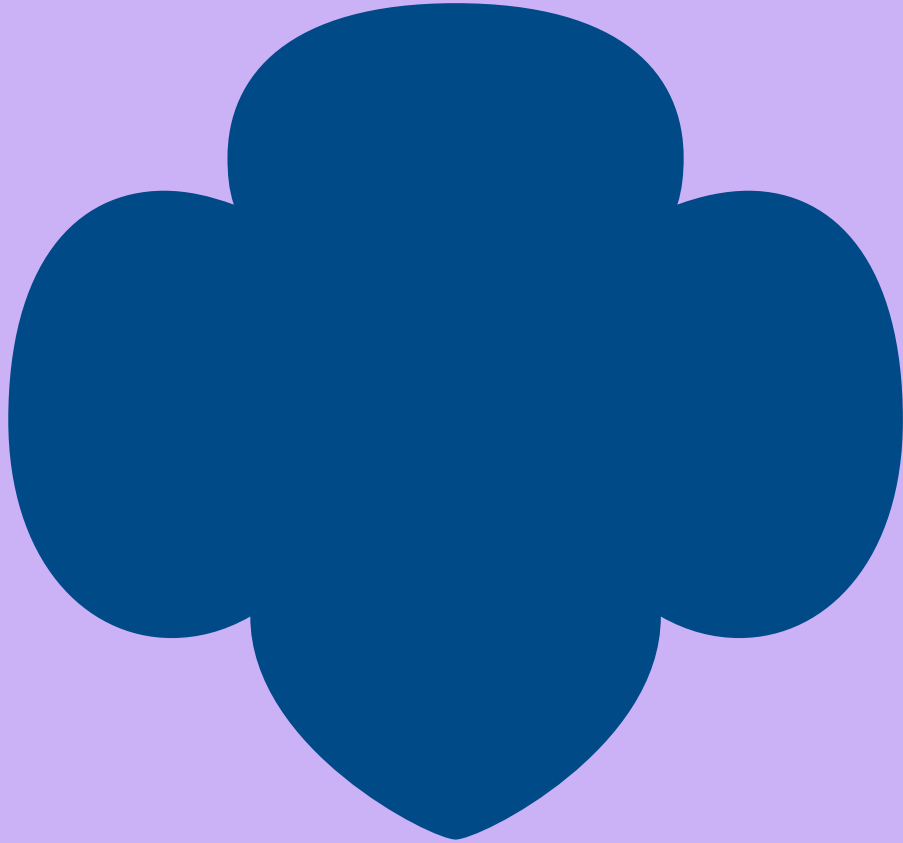


Imagine  
this  
scenario




Girl Scouts is a  
place that  
serves ALL girls.





Inclusion is more than a set of rules. It is an attitude and approach that ensures every Girl Scout feels a sense of belonging and is treated with respect and dignity.





# Tolerance

## Passive

In society, tolerance refers to the willingness to accept and respect the behaviors, beliefs, or practices of others, even when you disagree with or disapprove of them. It is a conscious effort to treat differing opinions with fairness and objectivity, free from prejudice



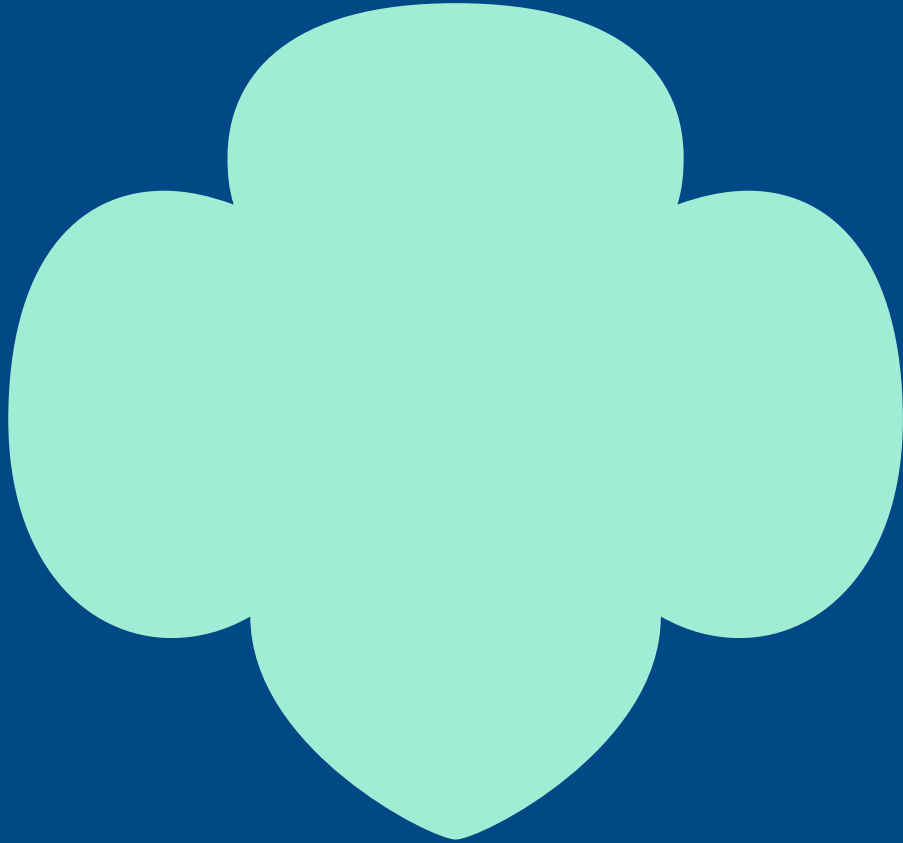
# Inclusive

## Active

The word **inclusive** generally means including everything, or intentionally ensuring that all individuals, groups, or elements are involved and valued.



Over 20% of  
the US  
population  
have a  
disability.



# Modeling Inclusive Behavior

Your Girl Scouts will look to you to set the tone. Model friendship, compassion, and empathy by consistently treating everyone with kindness



## Discover your own perceptions and behavior towards others

Notice how people in your life differ from you and appreciate those differences as meaningful and valuable.



## Stereotypes – Point them out and address them

Sometimes, instead of taking the time to get to know or understand a person or a group, some people will take a shortcut and make assumptions about them instead



## Introduce your Girl Scouts to people from all backgrounds and experiences

People in your social circle are often very similar to you. Make an effort to broaden your Girl Scouts social circle. Make sure you open your troop to people who are different than your girls.



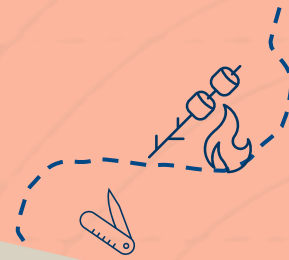
Consult with the  
experts!





# Girls are the Experts!

*Most Girls know their abilities and limitations. Ask, and they will tell!*





# Parents and Caregivers are experts!





# Meet My Scout

## Consider using Meet My Scout!



### Meet My Girl Scout

Please fill out this questionnaire to share more about your Girl Scout and how to support them! This information stays with your troop leader, to help them get to know your Girl Scout and give them the best experience possible.

What is your Girl Scout's name? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your Girl Scout's nickname or preferred name? \_\_\_\_\_

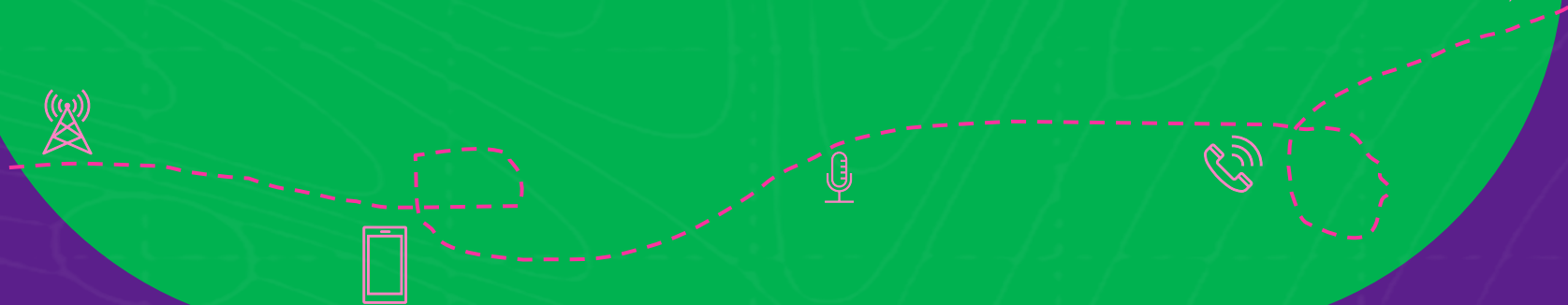
What pronouns does your Girl Scout use?  She/her/hers  He/him/his  They/them/theirs  
 Something else: \_\_\_\_\_

What language does your family prefer information in?  English  Hmong  Spanish  
 Another language: \_\_\_\_\_


What holidays does your family celebrate?  Christian holidays  Islamic holidays  Jewish holidays  
 United States federal holidays  
 Another holiday or set of holidays:



# Communicate



# The Language of Respect

Say This [✓]	Not This [X]
 Person with a disability	The handicapped / The disabled
Person who has Autism	The autistic
Person who uses a wheelchair	Confined to a wheelchair / Wheelchair-bound
Person who is blind	The blind

**Core Principle:** Use “People-First Language.” Put the person before the disability to validate their individuality and strength.



# Create



# Universal Design for Troop Meetings



“Give me what you naturally give to all the other girls: your love, your praise, your acceptance, and your faith in me.” — Advice from a Girl with a Disability





# Adapt



# Accommodating Neurodivergence

ADHD Strategies	Autism Strategies
Break long commitments down into smaller, manageable parts.	Reduce environmental overstimulation (loud noises, large crowds).
Provide physical outlets and fidgets.	Support routines by creating a highly visible schedule or agenda.
Vary schedules and give verbal reminders to stay on task.	Provide clear time warnings before transitions occur.
Address inappropriate behaviors in private; do not single them out.	

## Field Notes

*“Every girl’s needs are different. Always consult with the girl and her family to find the best approach.”*

# Adapting the Program: The Intent Framework



## The Traditional Requirement

The standard badge activity (e.g., “Build a campfire on the ground”).



## Identify the Intent

Ask yourself, what is the purpose of this activity? (e.g., “The intent is to learn fire safety and cook outdoors.”)



## Creative Adaptation

Modify the details to meet the intent safely. (e.g., “A Girl Scout in a wheelchair uses a tabletop charcoal grill or box oven instead.”)



## Reward Best Effort

All Girl Scouts are rewarded for their best efforts and participation, not for the flawless completion of a standardized task.



# Safety





# Safety & Risk Management

## Culture of Safety



### Safety Activity Checkpoints (SACs)

Your primary framework for evaluating risk. Use SACs to vet vendors and ensure activities provide reasonable accommodations for all body types and abilities.



### Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)

Document and practice how to respond to emergencies. Ensure your EAP explicitly accounts for the mobility and communication needs of every troop member.



### The Buddy System

A foundational Girl Scout practice. Pair Girl Scouts to watch out for each other, ensuring that no one is left behind and that immediate assistance is always within reach.



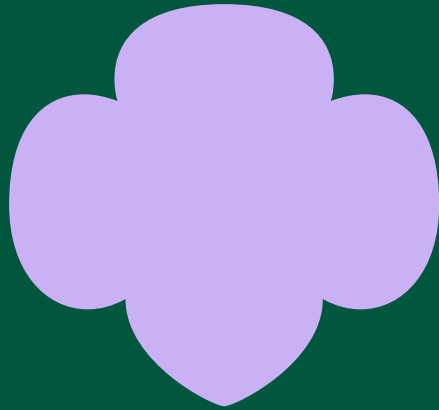
Safe boundaries create the space for radical inclusion,  
which powers the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.



## *Field Notes*

“As a volunteer, you’re not just helping—you’re inspiring. You’re a builder of community, a mentor, and a joyful guide who leads with kindness.”





# Resources & Reading

## Girl Scout Publications

[Why Tolerance Isn't Working](#)

[Disability Activist, Prosthetics Designer & Author](#)

[Girl Scouts – a Place for Girls of All Abilities](#)

[Because Girl Scouts Is for Everyone: How One](#)

[Troop Leader Supports Girls with Autism](#)

[Girls of All Abilities Can Explore the Great](#)

[Outdoors—Here's How!](#)

[Introduction to Inclusion](#)

[Accessible Eastern Sierra](#)

[RenoTahoe Accessible Outdoors](#)

[Accessible Nature](#)

[Guide to Adaptive Camping REI](#)

[The Importance of Positive Learning](#)

[Experiences for Kids of All Abilities](#)

[Within Reach – All Female Rock Climbing](#)

[Autism Safety](#)