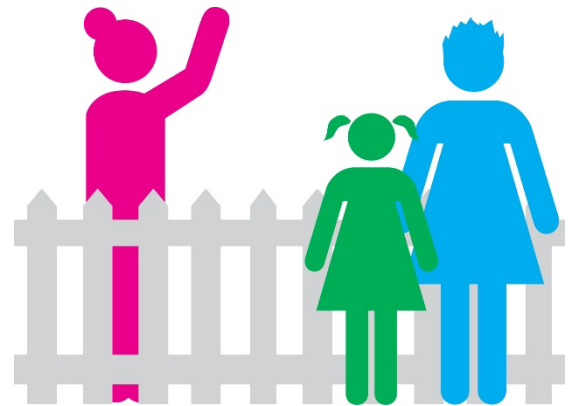


As a new troop leader, one of the most important things to know is that you don't have to do everything on your own. Managing a Girl Scout troop can be a big job! In addition to your co-leader, you'll need the help and support of your troop families to make sure the girls have a fun and successful experience.

It may seem easier to do it yourself in the beginning. You're excited and new to this, so it's hard to think about how other people can help. Our experienced leaders tell us – loud and clear – a supportive team of adults makes all the difference! To set the stage for collaboration and get family buy-in, you'll want to start engaging adults from the very beginning.

The best way to develop positive working relationships with families is to keep them informed about what's going on with the troop. You want to create an atmosphere where communication is open and there's transparency with the administration of the troop. If families feel knowledgeable about the troop activities they'll be more likely to get involved.

We highly recommend that all new troops kick off their Girl Scout experience with a mandatory parent meeting. This will give you a chance to set expectations, get paperwork taken care of, and identify parents for important troop supporting roles.



This packet will help you plan and execute your first family meeting. We have developed several tools to help you, including:

- **Family Meeting Tip Sheet** – an overview of how to set up and organize a family meeting.
- **Family Meeting Agenda** – use this sample to create your own agenda for the family meeting.
- **The Family Guide to Girl Scouts** – a great resource that outlines the important role that parents/caregivers play in the Girl Scout experience. Not included here, but it's available online as a PDF.
- **Becoming a Troop Volunteer or Adult Helper** – a handout you can give to families with details about volunteering.
- **Family Involvement Form** – a form for adults to share their interests and availability to help.
- **Meet my Girl Scout** – a form for families to share important information about their Girl Scout.
- **Volunteer Toolkit Flyer** – this informational sheet gives families an overview of how to log in to the VTK and see troop meeting plans for the year, upcoming events, and more.

* For downloads of these individual resources, please visit www.gssn.org and click on Forms. *

Your First Family Meeting

Managing a Girl Scout troop can be a big job, so it's a great opportunity to call on your village. We recommend scheduling a mandatory family meeting before your first girl meeting so that all of the adults are on the same page.

Ready to contact your troop families? The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is the best place to view a roster of your registered girls and adults. Visit www.gssn.org and click on My GS to access the Volunteer Toolkit. Once you're in the VTK, you can click on the My Troop tab to see all of the girls and adults who are registered to your troop.

Troop Leaders can also see their troop roster by logging in to their My GS member profile and clicking on the Troop tab. Please note that this tab shows you all registered members, members who are pending payment, and members whose registration has lapsed.

Tips for Running a Successful Family Meeting

- Maximize the time/date/location so all families can attend.
- Bring in extra adult helpers or older Girl Scouts to engage kids in age-appropriate activities during the meeting.
- Begin and end on time.

Outcomes of a Successful Family Meeting

- Families understand basic information about Girl Scouting.
- Families identify ways they will support the troop and leaders during the coming year.
- Families and leaders agree on what the troop pays for and what individual families pay for.
- Key positions are filled by willing adults.
- Families know how the troop leaders will communicate upcoming events and schedule changes.
- Families know about required forms and money due for various activities.
- Families have access to information about uniforms and books their girl needs.
- Families know that financial assistance is available if needed and how to request it.

Recommended Supplies for Family Meetings:

- Sign in sheet
- Name tags
- Meeting agenda
- Calendar of events/programs for your troop (*if you have this information already*)
- Becoming a Troop Volunteer handout
- Family Involvement form
- Family VTK flyer
- Meet My Girl Scout form
- Health History form
- Permission slips
- Uniform information
- Troop supplies list
- Pens
- Envelopes/receipt books (*if collecting money*)

1. Introductions

- Troop Leader names and contact information
- Parent introductions
- Basic communication expectations and preferences (call, email, text, etc.)

2. Troop Basics

- Time and location of troop meeting
- Troop and service unit number, troop level
- Attendance guidelines (call if you aren't coming, etc.)
- Snacks
- Girl Scout annual membership fee (\$25) required for each girl
- Uniforms and books – where to purchase
- Required forms: Health History and Parent Permission forms
- Helpful forms: Parent Involvement form and Meet My Girl Scout

3. Girl Scout Program

- The Girl Scout mission
- The Family Guide to Girl Scouting
- The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting
- Leadership Journeys
- Additional Girl Scout events and activities

4. Troop Support

- Ways parents will help the troop (Parent Involvement form)
- Adults who are interested in working directly with girls on a regular basis or handling any of the troop product sales/financials must become registered members and complete a background screening
- A successful, happy troop happens when adults volunteer

5. Plans for the Year

- Share any plans that have been made or talk about how the troop will make those decisions
- Provide a high-level overview of the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) and how parents/caregivers can use it to communicate with you and see troop meeting plans (VTK flyer)

6. Troop Finances

- Identify what girls and parents will pay for
- Identify what the troop will pay for
- Discuss troop dues
- Fall Product Sale happens in October (candy, magazines, nuts) and the Cookie Program happens January – March
- Financial assistance is available for membership dues, books, and uniform components

7. Field Parent/Caregiver Questions

8. Thank You

- It takes a village to support a successful Girl Scout troop
- Girls will gain courage, confidence, and character because of caring adults – like us!

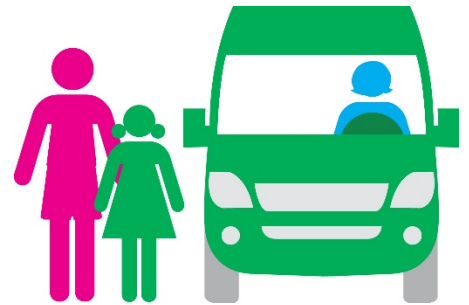


Welcome to Girl Scouts!

Your Girl Scout troop leaders have stepped up as volunteers to bring the best experience possible to your girl. They've been background screened and approved to serve as Girl Scout volunteers and receive training in delivering an awesome Girl Scout troop experience. Your troop leaders will handle much of the day-to-day operation of your girl's troop. However, to make your Girl Scout's experience truly awesome they need your support. It takes a village to support a successful Girl Scout troop!

Here are just a few of the ways you can help your girl's troop leader:

- Assist at troop meetings
- Be a driver for a troop field trip
- Chaperone on a troop overnight or campout
- Teach a new skill to the girls
- Keep track of badges and awards earned for the troop
- Service as the Troop Product Sales Coordinator



Let your troop leader know how you will be involved by completing the **Parent Involvement form** and saying "YES!" to supporting your girl's experience. By involving yourself in her Girl Scouting activities, you are showing your girl that you value and respect what she is doing.

At Girl Scouts, we are committed to ensuring that all girls are provided with impactful experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. We take that responsibility very seriously because girls need great adult volunteers to support their own leadership development. The following guidelines explain how we create a safe environment for girls and volunteers:

1. At least two non-related, registered, and background screened volunteers must be present at all Girl Scout activities.
2. All volunteers who will be directly responsible for the supervision of girls are required to become members of the organization and complete a background screening. The screening must be completed every three years.
3. All volunteers who are responsible for handling troop finances are required to become members of the organization and complete a background screening. The screening must be completed every three years.
4. If you are driving girls for troop activities, you are required to have a valid driver's license, a good driving record, and current auto insurance. Drivers are required to complete a background screening.



Parent Commitment Form

Parent participation is a requirement of this troop

Running a quality Girl Scout troop requires the involvement of **all** parents. Please let us know how you and/or other adults in your family will support your girl's troop. Submit your form today to get your preferred choice of how to help!

Girl Scout's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Send troop messages to this email.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Send troop messages to this email.

Assistant Troop Leader: Assists with planning and leading activities, communicates with parents

Activity Chaperone/Driver: Transports and/or accompanies the troop on trips

Troop Treasurer: Handles the troop bank account and finances

Snack Coordinator: Organizes and schedules the snack rotation for meetings

Cookie Helper: Organizes the troop's participation in the Girl Scout Cookie Program

Troop Registrar: Ensures that online registration, required forms, and dues are submitted

Camp Helper: Takes required training, assists in planning/leading outdoor activities

Fall Product Helper: Organizes the troop's participation in the Fall Product Sale

First-Aider: Certified in CPR and First Aid, attends trips and events with the troop.

Phone Tree Coordinator: Makes calls in case of last minute meeting/activity changes or emergencies

Field Trip Coordinator: Organizes and plans trips with the girls

Service Unit Meeting Representative: Attends monthly service unit meetings on behalf of the troop

Service Project Coordinator: Organizes and plans service projects with the girls

Uniform Helper: Assists girls with sewing or ironing-on their badges, patches, and awards

Badge Coordinator: Takes a specific badge or Journey and helps the girls work through the requirements

Are you certified in First Aid? Yes No

Troop Photographer: Takes photos and posts them online or creates a memory book

Times Available:

Weekdays from _____ to _____

Weeknights from _____ to _____

Saturdays from _____ to _____

Sundays from _____ to _____

Meeting Helper: Helps the troop leaders execute weekly meetings by distributing supplies, handing out snack, etc.

Do you have any special hobbies or skills you'd like to share with the troop?

Cookie Booth Chaperone: Supervises a group of girls at one or more cookie booths

This form is designed for parents and/or guardians to provide troop leaders additional information about their Girl Scout that is not included on health history forms. Troop leaders will keep this information in their troop records and will not share the form without the express permission of the parent/guardian.

My Girl Scout, _____, is very excited about being part of the Girl Scout movement. This is her first year in your troop and I want you to know a little more about her:

She is most happy when...

She is unhappy when...

She gets excited about...

She is afraid of...

This year in her Girl Scout troop, she is looking forward to...

She might need the following special accommodations during Girl Scout activities:

My additional comments:

Now you can follow along as she takes the lead!

You already know your girl loves Girl Scouts for the friends, the fun, and all the new things she gets to experience.

But wouldn't it be great to learn more about the finer details? To see what her troop has planned for the year? To find out what she needs for each meeting? Or to see the troop's end-of-year finances?

Now you can! With the **Volunteer Toolkit**, a digital tool that shows troop plans in one convenient place, you can easily log in to:

- Check out what your girl's troop or group is planning this year
- See when troop events are scheduled
- Stay in touch with the troop leader and volunteers
- Discover new ways to participate in the Girl Scout experience with her

Want to learn more about the Volunteer Toolkit? Just visit www.gssn.org, click on My GS, and check it out!

