



Short & Snappies

What are Short & Snappies?

A short and snappy is a learning opportunity for volunteers which can be presented as part of a volunteer support/community meeting. They can take anywhere from 10 to 45 minutes and are designed to engage volunteers in group activity and discussion and provide them with tools to use with their troops.

A short and snappy can be led by any interested volunteer, so reach out to others to increase engagement!

Choosing the Right Topic

When considering which Short & Snappy to present at your meeting, consider how much time you have available, the learning needs of your audience, and any seasonal considerations - make sure you present a topic which is timely and covers an identified need.

Keep on Track

Stay within the allotted time and ensure the group doesn't get sidetracked to different topics.

Benefits

- ❖ Establish a friendly and informal environment.
- ❖ Presenting engaging topics which are different at each meeting keeps volunteers coming back for more!
- ❖ Boosts the confidence of troop leaders and provides them with tools they can use with their troops.
- ❖ Provides time and space for adult volunteers to interact, engage, and connect.

Learning Objective

To explore privileged and marginalized group dynamics and begin an open discussion about inclusion.

Time Needed

30 minutes

Supplies

Enough playing cards for one per participant. Ensure a good range of cards including some face cards, some middle value cards, and some low value cards.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Ask for a commitment from all participants to ensure a safe space for everyone.

Activity

Give each participant a playing card and instruct them not to look at the card. Have them hold the card out in front of them so that others can see it but they can't.

Give the group 5 minutes to mingle and talk to each other. They can talk about anything they like, with just one rule: they must treat each other based upon the value of the card they are holding. Ace is high and gets the best treatment/most deference, then face cards. Middle cards get reasonable treatment and the lower value cards get the worst treatment.

Coming Together

Begin with a group discussion agreement. Ask everyone to commit to ensuring this is a safe space for everyone to share their thoughts and feelings.

Debrief prompts:

What card do you think you have, and why?

What happened? What did you notice?

What were you feeling? Did your feelings change over time?

What were some of the subtle ways people were treated as "less than"?

What were some of the ways people were given better treatment?

If people feel comfortable sharing, ask them to describe times when they've felt like a member of an "in-group" or an "out-group".

What could be some of the exclusionary dynamics that exist within Girl Scouts?

What do people in marginalized groups miss out on or have to work extra hard to get?

What assumptions are made about those in privileged groups vs those in marginalized groups?

What can we do if we observe or experience exclusionary comments or actions?

Discover: Volunteers explore group dynamics and discuss how these may impact their troops.

Connect: Volunteers connect to brainstorm solutions.

Take Action: Volunteers learn to look out for exclusionary behaviors in their troops.

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to allow volunteers to explore their own personal leadership style and how they can best utilize their skills in the context of a youth-led Girl Scout troop.

Time Needed

20 minutes

Supplies

- Printed copies of quiz (one per participant).
- Printed copies of explanations (2 or 3 per group).

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.

Activity

Hand out copies of the 'Birds of a Feather' assessment and ask participants to complete it individually. Taking one row at a time, each description in the row should be given a rank score between 1 and 4. Each number should only be used once per row, and all descriptors should be given a ranking. Once completed, ask them to total their scores for each column. The column with the highest score gives them their leadership style. A = Eagle, B = Peacock, C = Dove, D = Owl.

Have the participants separate into groups according to their leadership style. If anyone is split evenly between two styles, they can choose which group to go with.

Explain that each leadership style has strengths and weaknesses in the context of youth-led Girl Scout troops. Hand out the explanations of each style.

Coming Together

In their groups, participants can discuss and answer the following questions:

- 1) How can they use their strengths to ensure their troop is youth-led?
- 2) What aspects of their leadership style may work against them when it comes to facilitating a youth-led troop?
- 3) How can they make these aspects work for them instead?

Ask each group to choose a representative to report back to the main group on the outcome of their discussion.

Discover: Volunteers are encouraged to be introspective and take a deeper look at how their leadership styles can work for and against them.

Connect: Brainstorm together to problem solve.

Take Action: put their findings into practice to make their troops more youth-led!



Birds of a Feather Assessment

1. Rank each row according to the scale at the right
2. After ranking all rows, add each column and enter the total below.

4 – Most like me
 3 – A lot like me
 2 – Somewhat like me
 1 – Least like me

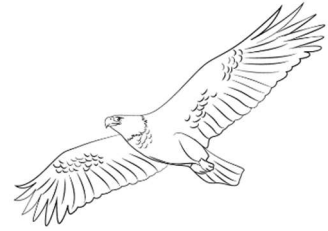
Competitive; Intense <input type="checkbox"/>	Creative; Impulsive <input type="checkbox"/>	Cooperative; Relaxed <input type="checkbox"/>	Thorough; Detailed <input type="checkbox"/>
Direct; To the Point <input type="checkbox"/>	Talkative; Lively <input type="checkbox"/>	Friendly; Casual <input type="checkbox"/>	Specific; Precise <input type="checkbox"/>
Like to "tell" others what to do <input type="checkbox"/>	Like to "sell" others on ideas and projects <input type="checkbox"/>	Like to "do" The work Collaboratively <input type="checkbox"/>	Like to "think" things through Thoroughly. <input type="checkbox"/>
No-nonsense; Blunt <input type="checkbox"/>	Animated; Colorful <input type="checkbox"/>	Sensitive; Caring <input type="checkbox"/>	Quiet; Thoughtful <input type="checkbox"/>
Results- oriented; Take-charge <input type="checkbox"/>	Charming; Magnetic <input type="checkbox"/>	Warm; Flexible <input type="checkbox"/>	Logical; Analytical <input type="checkbox"/>
Daring; Bold; Risk-taker <input type="checkbox"/>	Dramatic; Emotional; Demonstrative <input type="checkbox"/>	Dependable; Empathic; Concerned <input type="checkbox"/>	Determined; Rational; Careful <input type="checkbox"/>
Directing; Controlling <input type="checkbox"/>	Inspiring; Visionary <input type="checkbox"/>	Team player; Facilitator <input type="checkbox"/>	Task-oriented; Seek data <input type="checkbox"/>
Total: _____ A	Total: _____ B	Total: _____ C	Total: _____ D

Your **highest** score represents your strongest bird characteristic; the **lowest** the bird you are least like.

Keep in mind – scores might change over time, in different positions or organizations.

Eagle (A)

Your strength is delivering results.



If your highest score is Eagle, you are a natural born leader. You like it best when you are in charge and in a position to get things done quickly.

- You tend to speak quickly and directly – you are not one to “beat around the bush.”
- You don’t like small talk, but rather prefer to discuss what you want to achieve and the results you are going to accomplish. You often begin sentences with, “I will...” or “I can...”
- Eagles thrive on change, stimulation, challenging work assignments, and high pressure.
- You work fast and get impatient when things aren’t progressing as quickly as you’d like.
- You set many goals and like to work on several projects at once.
- Your chief desire at work is to be productive, deliver results quickly, and make an impact on your organization.

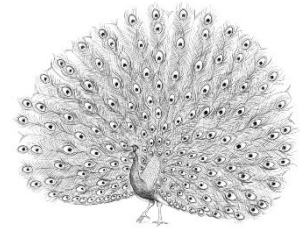
As an Eagle, you tend to:

<i>Think a lot about:</i>	Results and achievements
<i>Value in others:</i>	Productivity
<i>Enjoy:</i>	Competition, pressure, challenging work
<i>Dislike:</i>	Wasting time
<i>Have trouble dealing with:</i>	“Fuzzy thinkers,” ambiguity, uncertainty
<i>Express anger:</i>	Aggressively
<i>Embarrassed by:</i>	Others getting “too personal” with you
<i>Want to be appreciated for:</i>	Your accomplishments
<i>Like to be rewarded with:</i>	More authority, power, control, status

To increase your effectiveness with others who are different from you: Work to become more patient and a better listener. Others may not move at your speed and need more time to process information and adjust to change. Take time to show people that you can care about them and their concerns. Learn to give clearer instructions when you need something from other people. You may need to “soften” your style a bit to avoid hurting other people’s feelings.

Peacock (B)

Your strength is creativity and building relationships.



If your highest score is peacock, you are lively and entertaining. You like it best when you are the center of attention, stimulating others to have fun.

- You tend to speak quickly, in an animated style. You are not able to hide your feelings, especially when you are excited.
- You love telling stories, relishing all the colorful details and holding others' attention with your dramatic style. You often begin sentences with "I want..."
- Peacocks thrive on change, stimulation, novelty, creative projects, and fun.
- You work quickly and get impatient when things get too routine or boring.
- You need a lot of freedom from structure and rules and think of yourself as a "big picture" person who does not want to be bothered with the details.
- Your chief desire at work is to contribute to others, create many alternative solutions to problems, and make work as interesting and fun as possible for yourself and others.

As a Peacock, you tend to:

<i>Think a lot about:</i>	Vision, dreams, aspirations
<i>Value in others:</i>	Self-expression, creativity
<i>Enjoy:</i>	Challenging work, stimulation, novelty, fun
<i>Dislike:</i>	Being bored
<i>Have trouble dealing with:</i>	Rules and authority figures
<i>Express anger by:</i>	Getting frustrated and/or attacking
<i>Embarrassed by:</i>	Being criticized for "showing off"
<i>Want to be appreciated for:</i>	Your uniqueness, creativity, and contribution
<i>Like to be rewarded with:</i>	Attention, recognition, applause

To increase your effectiveness with others, who are different from you: Work to become less impulsive and think through what you want to accomplish before you act. You could benefit from managing your time better and becoming more organized. Peacocks especially can benefit from talking less and listening more. Your exuberance can sometimes overwhelm others, so it can be helpful to contain your energy and enthusiasm to allow others to express themselves and share in the spotlight. Learn to summarize and be succinct, rather than wanting to tell all the juicy details in every situation.

Dove (C)

Your strength is your flexibility and teamwork.



If your highest score is Dove, you are a natural team player. You are well liked and respected, for both your good work and your easy style.

- You tend to speak indirectly and often solicit the opinions of others. You are not one to assert yourself over others.
- You share your perceptions and feeling with others, but only after you have asked them what *they* think or feel. You often begin sentences with what *they* think or feel. You often begin sentences with “I feel...” or “It seems to me we could...”
- Does thrive on collaboration, cooperation, team projects, group activities, mutual support, and peaceful togetherness.
- You are rarely in a hurry and work at a steady, even pace. You do not like pressure and you need some time to adjust to change.
- You prefer to work with others and often take on the role of peacemaker since you do not like conflict or confrontation.
- Your chief desire at work is to be a part of a harmonious, productive team.

As a Dove, you tend to:

<i>Think a lot about:</i>	Other people and relationships
<i>Value in others:</i>	Thoughtfulness, sensitivity, caring
<i>Enjoy:</i>	Collaboration, teamwork
<i>Dislike:</i>	Conflict, tension, confrontation
<i>Have trouble dealing with:</i>	Being overlooked or ignored
<i>Express anger by:</i>	Becoming conciliatory and/or upset
<i>Embarrassed by:</i>	Being challenged by assertive others
<i>Want to be appreciated for:</i>	Your participation and being of service
<i>Like to be rewarded with:</i>	Acceptance, being liked, being needed

To increase your effectiveness with others who are different from you: You can work to become clearer about your own opinions and ideas and express them more assertively. Sometimes conflict or confrontation can be positive and constructive and you can grow professionally by developing your tolerance for honest disagreements and healthy debate. Become more comfortable with change and uncertainty and be ready to take on leadership roles with the situation is appropriate.

Owl (D)

Your strength is your practicality and attention to detail.



If your highest score is Owl, you are objective, analytical, and logical. You like it best when you have plenty of data and information from which to make informed decisions.

- You tend to speak somewhat slowly and indirectly, with a great deal of thought and reflection.
- You do not like small talk, but rather prefer objective discussions involving facts, numbers, and data. You often begin sentences with “I think...” or “Data indicates...”
- Owls thrive on lots of information – timely and accurate.
- You work in a steady, methodical manner. You are thorough and attentive to detail and follow step-by-step procedures in sequence. You prefer to focus on one project at a time.
- You are well organized, with to-do lists, information at your fingertips, and a neat work area.
- Your chief desire at work is to produce thorough high-quality work, exercising good judgment in all situations.

As an Owl, you tend to:

<i>Think a lot about:</i>	Facts, details
<i>Value in others:</i>	Good judgment
<i>Enjoy:</i>	Having plenty of accurate information
<i>Dislike:</i>	Making mistakes, being wrong
<i>Have trouble dealing with:</i>	Those who want quick, simple answers
<i>Express anger:</i>	Calmly, rationally
<i>Embarrassed by:</i>	Others' impatience with thoughtful analysis
<i>Want to be appreciated for:</i>	Your high quality work
<i>Like to be rewarded with:</i>	More responsibility, autonomy

To increase your effectiveness with others who are different from you: You can focus more on the big picture and the end result, rather than getting too caught up in details. Your attention to quality is good, but sometimes perfection is a barrier to getting things done quickly. Try to be more flexible and open, particularly in responding to change. Your planning skills are excellent and a little more spontaneity could bring some helpful balance into your work style.

Learning Objective

Reinforcing the inclusion of traditional Girl Scout activities into year planning and the importance of keeping such activities youth-led.

Time Needed

20 minutes

Supplies

- Printed copies of attached handout.
- Materials dependent on chosen ceremony.
- Membership pins for new leaders

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.

Introduction

Provide copies of the handout to all attendees and briefly discuss the key elements of a Girl Scout ceremony. Ask for attendees' thoughts, ideas and input.

Ask:

Why is it important to celebrate Girl Scout traditions?

How can ceremonies bring troops together?

What are some ways we can ensure that ceremonies are inclusive?

How can leaders ensure that ceremonies are youth-led?

Activity: Investiture and Re-dedication

Invest your new volunteers and re-dedicate the returning volunteers with a short and simple ceremony (see attachment for options!)

Have the group stand in a circle and ask new volunteers to step forward. Provide each new volunteer with an adult membership pin and explain the tradition of placing pins upside down until new members have done a good turn for someone. You may wish to pin them upside down, or you could also choose to pin right-side up because they have already done the good deed of volunteering as a Girl Scout leader!

Once each new leader has received their pin, ask them to return to their place in the circle and lead the group in the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Discover: Volunteers understand the importance of ceremonies and incorporating traditions into their year plan.

Connect: Volunteers connect with each other and with their youth to continue the tradition.

Take Action: Reinforce Girl Scout values, and guide troops to become more youth-led.



Girl Scout Ceremonies



Girl Scout ceremonies are one of our movement's rich traditions and reinforce the values of Girl Scouting. They can be incorporated into meetings (e.g. Flag and Opening Ceremonies) or be more elaborate (e.g. Court of Awards). Ceremonies may also recognize other accomplishments, or special Girl Scout holidays. Whatever the purpose and whatever the ceremony, the youth should always be an integral part of the planning process.

Things to Consider

Purpose: the reason, the motivation for, or the main idea of the ceremony. What is the driving force of the ceremony?

Possible purposes include to welcome new members, celebrate accomplishments, and to express Girl Scout values.

Mood and Atmosphere: choose pleasant surroundings appropriate to the purpose. Consider having music, songs, readings, dramatics or using symbols to build an appropriate mood for the ceremony. Allow the youth to be creative in determining the props and equipment to be used: bringing their individual personalities to each ceremony will also help build the event's atmosphere.

Personality: bring out the characteristics of the youth and volunteers involved in the ceremony. Allow the youth to take on roles that express who they are as an individual, highlight their personal qualities, and allow them to flourish at their own level.

Setting: consider both time of day and location, and how they may impact both attendance and the mood of the ceremony. Location should be suitable for the purpose and desired atmosphere. Consider use of props during the ceremony. For example, for a Bridging Ceremony, they may want to include an outdoor bridge to ceremonially walk across. Make sure the location can accommodate the activities and attendees planned, and be sure to make reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities.

Safety: always refer to relevant Safety Activity Checkpoints and ensure the safety of everyone involved in the ceremony.

Theme: a theme can be used to develop a ceremony's purpose. The topic or idea is expressed through activities, decorations, invitations, and refreshments. It is a common thread that brings the ceremony together.

Rehearse: plan for rehearsal time no matter how short/simple the ceremony may be!

Types of Ceremony

There are many types of ceremonies and, with imagination and creative use of resources, there's no limit to what your troop can accomplish! Examples of ceremonies which are a traditional part of the Girl Scout experience are:

Investiture: welcome new members and ceremonially present them with a membership pin.

Re-dedication: members renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law at the beginning of a new membership year.

Opening and Closing ceremonies: incorporated into each meeting to make them special.

Flag Ceremony: honoring the US flag as the symbol of our country's hopes, dreams, and people.

Bridging: commemorating youth's progression to the next level of Girl Scouting.

Court of Awards: recognizing the achievements of both youth and volunteers throughout the year.

Higher Awards Ceremonies: celebrating youth who have earned a journey, Bronze, Silver, or Gold award.

Girl Scouts' Own: a youth-planned program allowing them to explore their feelings around a specific topic (e.g. friendship, or a part of the Girl Scout law). May include poems, songs, and reflections.

Leader/Adult Investiture and Rededication Ceremonies



New Leader Investiture Ceremony

Reading – A Leader’s Resolution

I shall study my girls so that I may understand them.
I shall like my girls so that I can help them.
I shall learn, for they have much to teach me
I shall laugh, for youth grows comfortable with laughter.
I shall give myself freely, yet I shall take some that they may acquire the habit of giving.
I shall be a friend, for a friend is needed.
I shall lead, yet I shall be aware of pushing.
I shall listen, for a listener prevents combustion.
I shall not overlook mistakes, yet I will not blame them.
Lastly, I shall try to be that which I hope they think I am.

Say the Girl Scout Promise – have a new leader light the 3 Promise candles and everyone recites the Promise together.

Sing: Let us all join in singing “When ere You Make a Promise”.

Have returning Leaders read: As I welcome you to your new position as a Girl Scout Leader

We give to you the adventure of seeing a girl try something new.
The joy of seeing a girl smile at you as she sings around a campfire.
The pride in seeing her progress in understanding herself, troop, community, and the world.
The friendship of the truest of friends, the heritage of the future of a great movement and the gift of eternal youth.

**Now, in the words of Juliette Low, we say to each of you
“I trust you on your honor to keep the Promise which you have just made,
and this pin is the symbol of it”.**

Leader Rededication Ceremony

Materials:

3 candles in holders

Lighter or matches



The three candles are lit to represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise. Please join me in the Girl Scout Promise.

**On my honor I will try,
To serve God and my Country,
To help people at all times,
and to live by the Girl Scout Law**

What have you found that keeps you in Girl Scouts?

(Have each person say one of these and/or they can say one of their own)

Sisterhood – friendship with girls and with other women

Acceptance – of me as I am, not because of who my spouse is, or what my job is, or how much money I have, but of me, for what I can do, for what I am.

Service – in both seeing the need for service and the skills to meet the need.

Adventure – new trails to follow, new tests of skills and endurance, new things to learn.

Happiness – a deepened sense of the never-ending joy of living.

Responsibility – with responsibility comes “strength to lead and faith to follow”.

Sing: “Make New Friends”



Lesson of the Pearls (Adult Investiture /Rededication Ceremony)

Materials:

2-4 adults as leaders
10 adults as pearls
Treasure Chest or precious box
10 large plastic pearls or white beads



Leader #1:

Tonight we are gathered to share in the dedication of our new and returning leaders to the ideals of Girl Scouting.

Leader #2:

At this time, the members of Service Unit _____ will share with each other the "Lesson of the Pearls" found in our discovered treasure chest of Girl Scouting.

(as each pearl is talked about it will be dropped into the treasure chest)

Pearl #1:

The first pearl stands for **WISDOM**. You have shown your joy in exploring wisdom through Girl Scouting.

Pearl #2:

The second pearl symbolizes **BEAUTY**. You are beautiful to your sister Girl Scouts for you give of yourself.

Pearl #3:

The third pearl is **STRENGTH**. You are the strength of the future of Girl Scouting.

Pearl #4:

The fourth pearl is the symbol of **TRUTH**. You are an example of the truth of the ideas of Girl Scouting.

Pearl #5:

The fifth pearl is **FIDELITY**. You have kept your promise and have affirmed it for life.

Pearl #6:

The sixth pearl is our symbol of **FELLOWSHIP**. You have extended the hand of friendship and you have reaped the rewards.

Pearl #7:

The seventh pearl is **COOPERATION**. You are an example of total cooperation and your many accomplishments reflect your willingness to work in harmony with others.

Pearl #8:

The eighth pearl is a symbol of **LOYALTY**. You are committed to the Law of Girl Scouting and strive to live by it.

Pearl #9:

The ninth pearl is for **VISION**. You can see the future of Girl Scouts and will do your part to insure its continued success.

Pearl #10:

The tenth pearl stands for **SERVICE**. You continue to give of yourself to others in need.

Leader #3:

You stand here, a chain of friendship that encircles the globe. Our chain is made strong by your caring, your sharing and a desire to be the best that you can be.

Leader #4:

Our wish is for you to explore the many treasures to be found in our chest of pearls. Remember to always be a link in our chain of friendship. Please join me in reciting the Girl Scout Promise.

Everyone: Say the Girl Scout Promise

**On my honor, I will try:
To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.**

Patchwork

What you need:

Variety of colored squares of paper or fabric (1 square per person)

Poster Board divided into grid squares (1 square per person)

Tacky Putty (1 dab of putty per square)

Make sure each paper square is the same size as the grid square. Put putty dot in center of each grid square.

As leaders are called forward, they choose a colored paper and when told to do so add it to the patchwork grid.

This ceremony can be done for Service Unit Team members or troops leaders or for the girls with a few minor wording changes.

Speaker #1: Being a Girl Scout leader is like managing a quilt. First, we gather together our pieces (girls) from different origins and cuts of materials.

Speaker #2: Some are shy, unimposing – like pastels. Others are dizzy patterns of vibrant color. We must bind them together, matching their sameness, blending their differences.

Speaker #3: The thread of Scouting is strong. Our own hands must be steady and sure, patiently making each stitch small and even.

Speaker #4: Until – finally – the quilt is finished, with a background of the Promise and Law and a thick padding of love and understanding. And though each patch is different, together they are strong, beautiful and warm; and the seamstress can be proud.

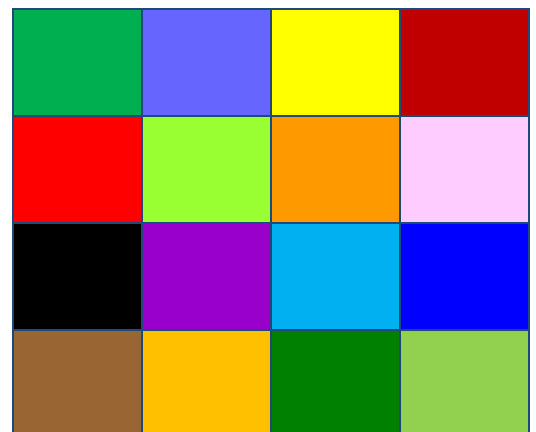
Speaker #5: This then is Girl Scouting. It is the Girl Scouting of returning leaders and the Girl Scout leaders to come.

Would the new leaders please step forward to make their Promise and a commitment toward building this patchwork piece. (the new leaders come forward and put their patchwork squares on the grid)

Speaker #6: Now would the continuing leaders rise and commit themselves to continuing their pieces of patchwork by joining us and making the Promise together.

Everyone: Say the Girl Scout Promise

Let us all join in singing “When Ere You Make a Promise”.



Colors of Candlelight

What you will need:

A table

A candle holder for 5 candles

One green, one red, one blue, one white and one yellow candle

Lighter or matches



The group stands in a semicircle around the table.

Have one speaker for each candle.

As each color is described, the speaker lights that candle.

Speaker #1:

The **green** candle stands for our Girl Scout program reminding us that we have a duty to perform – to instill in our girls the practice of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. It also means we are not to lose sight of these principles when emotions run high. If problems arise, we go back and review the purpose and ideals of Girl Scouting, for above all our thoughts and actions must be for the girls we are serving.

Speaker #2:

The **red** candle stands for fire, one of humanity's greatest blessings, but fire can also destroy. We can use fire for good or evil. We can be kind and considerate or we can trust each other if our fires are uncontrolled.

Speaker #3:

The **blue** candle stands for faith and loyalty, our faith in each other and our loyalty to our beliefs – our love of God, home and country.

Speaker #4:

The **white** candle stands for truth, honor, and fairness. May we treat all the girls in the troop with fairness and honor striving to be truthful and honest in our hearts.

Speaker #5:

The **Yellow** candle stands for sunshine, the sun that warms us all. Just as the sun warms us, may we in turn spread warmth and friendship to those we meet. Let's make Girl Scouting fun for our girls but at the same time not lose sight of the Promise and Law.

Adult Investiture/Rededication Ceremony

At each * a candle should be lit

Leader: Today (or tonight) we came in silence as we rededicate ourselves to Girl Scouting. We light three candles signifying the three parts of our Promise as together we renew it. Please join me in saying the Girl Scout Promise.

Leader: Our opportunities come to use through sharing our Girl Scout values – the right to grow through our experience in the Promise and Law. This candlelight becomes bright as we realize our golden opportunities.

New Adult: On my honor I will try *. I cannot succeed if I do not try. So I will try, I may not always succeed but I will grow with every new experience as I put into practice the Promise and Law.

Returning Adult: Our goal is to help girls be good citizens today and active citizens tomorrow

New Adult: I am proud of God and my country *. And on my honor I will try to serve God, my country, and help people at all times to the best of my ability.

Returning Adult: Girl Scouts love their country and have an understanding of its relationship to the world.

New Adult: All women are sisters *. We learn that there are many likenesses in all people, but where there are differences we gain exciting opportunities of understanding.

Returning Adult: The pathway of Girl Scouting grows broader when other people become involved.

New Adult: Others need me *. It is good to know that I have skills and knowledge that I can share.

Returning Adult: Opportunities to develop into a more capable person are given to Girl Scouts as they assume their roles in the troop.

New Adult: I am a link in the golden chain of Girl Scouting *. The chain can be no stronger than each link

Returning Adult: Each Girl Scout is an individual and by keeping herself forever fit, she is better ready to serve others and to enjoy everyday living.

New Adult: It is my privilege to keep myself physically fit *. To live with kind thoughts and unselfish deeds and to keep myself morally strong.

Returning Adult: And so the light grows brighter as it now fills this room and our hearts with the flame of accomplishment.



Flower Ceremony for Troop Leaders

What you will need:

Flower stems, real if you have them, or tissue paper, of each color are given to a leader with their matching reading.

One at a time the new leaders come forward, read their piece and put their flower into a vase.

- I will do my best to be honest and fair. The **white** flower symbolizes truth, honor, trustworthiness, and fairness. I will be honest in my intentions and think fairly on behalf of all of the girls in my troop.
- I will do my best to be friendly and helpful. The **orange** flower symbolizes friendship and generosity. I will be a positive role model showing that I am a good friend and am generous with my time and resources.
- I will do my best to be considerate and caring. The **yellow** flower represents warmth and kindness to friends. I will be considerate of families' needs and challenges and careful in my planning and inclusion.
- I will do my best to be courageous and strong. The **red** flower represents our strength and our courage to try new things. I will be an advocate for my girls and support them as needed.
- I will do my best to be responsible for what I say and do. The **gold** flower reminds me to always be reliable. I will do what I promise to do and follow through on my responsibilities.
- I will do my best to respect myself and others. The **purple** flower represents the concern that I have for the well being of myself and others. I make a point of not listening to or repeating unkind comments.
- I will do my best to respect authority. The **light blue** flower represents careful thought, attention, and concern. I will follow procedures and guidelines in a timely manner, understanding that organization and oversight are what keep our organization strong.
- I will do my best to use resources wisely. The color **green** represents nature. I will teach my girls how to keep and preserve our valuable natural resources.
- I will do my best to make the world a better place. The **dark blue** flower represents deep thought about myself and my world. I will help my girls understand their role in making the world better for everyone.

I will do my best to be a sister to every other Girl Scout. The rose represents love, a basic ingredient in being a sister. I am thankful for my Sister Girl Scouts and will prove myself to be a loyal sister.



Learning Objective:

This activity is designed to teach volunteers the difference between Community Service and Take Action projects.

Time Needed

15- 15-20 minutes

Supplies

- Pre-printed and cut slips from page 2

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Introduction

Many troop leaders, and hence youth members, have difficulty recognizing the difference between a community service project and a Take Action project (TAP). Both serve important needs, but at different levels. Projects to earn journeys and higher awards should always be TAPs. The key difference is the answer to the question: "How will this continue to work after you've finished doing your part?"

Activity

Briefly discuss the key difference between a TAP and a community service project: community service makes the world a better place at that time while a TAP continues to make an impact after the initial involvement is finished, either because it is a permanent installation or because other people have been educated and inspired to continue the impact. One important element of a TAP is consideration of the root cause - the *why* behind the issue - and the development of a project that specifically targets that root cause. Community service is typically done *for* the community, while a TAP is done *with* the community.

After a couple of minutes explaining the difference, split participants into groups and provide each group with the first halves of the cut out slips of paper which they should sort into a community service pile and a TAP pile. After they have sorted, provide the second halves, which they should match up and determine whether or not they were correct. Discuss as a large group.

Extension

If time allows, extend this activity by giving examples of community service projects and asking participants to think of ways they could be extended into TAPs (see attached examples).

Discover: Volunteers learn the difference between TAP and CSP so they are better able to support their troops' journeys and higher awards.

Connect: Volunteers learn where their troops may be able to connect to develop TAPs.

Take Action: Take action by taking better action!

Community Service vs Take Action

To resolve the issue of litter on the playground at lunchtime, the troop organizes a school-wide spring clean-up.	This is a CSP. While there is community involvement, there is no action taken to address the root cause of why there is litter on the playground.
To resolve the issue of litter on the playground at lunchtime, the troop meets with the principal, who tells them that the garbage cans get full quickly and kids have nowhere to put their trash. The troop organizes a spring clean-up and a fundraiser and they use the proceeds to install a new garbage can.	This is a TAP. The troop worked with the community to identify the root cause of the issue, displayed active leadership in organizing the clean-up, and worked to prevent this from happening again in the future.
To resolve the issue of overcrowding at the animal shelter, the troop advertises a local adoption event where 23 dogs find new homes.	This is a CSP – while these dogs have found new homes, there is nothing in place to prevent the shelter from becoming overcrowded again.
To resolve the issue of overcrowding at the animal shelter, the troop hosts a booth at the farmers' market where they teach younger kids to make cat toys to donate to the shelter, and they talk to adults about local free spay and neuter programs, and pass out information on available resources.	This is a TAP. The troop displayed active leadership while teaching others how to make cat toys, and educated the community on the importance of spaying and neutering their pets.
To resolve the issue of the local homeless shelter not having enough volunteers to cook and serve food, the troop signs up for a week and serves food to the families at the shelter.	This is a CSP. The troop has filled the homeless shelter's need for one week, but the lack of volunteers will again be an issue the following week.
To resolve the issue of the local homeless shelter not having enough volunteers to cook and serve food, the troop partners with the shelter staff to create an effective sign up process which they advertise to their local community via flyers and social media posts.	This is a TAP. The sign-up process will last beyond the troop's involvement and will continue to be advertised by the shelter staff. They have also effectively raised awareness and displayed active leadership.
To resolve the issue of a lack of donations at the food bank, the troop advertises a can donation drive and picks up cans from residences in their neighborhood.	This is a CSP. A one-time donation drive is never a TAP as the root cause has not been identified and the need is only filled for a short time.
To resolve the issue of a lack of donations at the food bank, the troop works with both the food bank and their school to identify an area at the front of the school for a permanent collection bin, and the food bank staff add it to their weekly pick up schedule.	This is a TAP. The food donations will continue to be collected on a weekly basis by the food bank staff after the troop's involvement has ended.



Community Service vs Take Action



These are examples of community service projects: use them to begin a discussion about how they may be expanded into a Take Action project. Remember: a TAP is completed *with* the community it benefits, addresses a root cause, and has an ongoing impact. The suggestions given are just one way that the TAP could be approached - there are many "correct" answers possible, so use these as conversation starters!

Community Service

Possible Take Action

Clean up your local park

Meet with the park rangers, identify a likely root cause, e.g. lack of garbage cans. Obtain approval and raise funding to install a new can.

Collect leftover crayons for
The Crayon Initiative

Meet with the principal and PTA to seek approval to have permanent crayon collection boxes placed in each classroom and identify someone who will be responsible for shipping them.

Host activities for kids in the local
hospital

Identify the needs of the kids by speaking to hospital personnel. Raise funds to purchase activity stations which will fill those needs and be long lasting.

Make blankets for the animal shelter

Work with your Girl Scout service unit to host an annual event where troops learn to make blankets.

Collect food for the food bank

Collect food and develop a recipe book of nutritious meals using simple ingredients. Print several copies and give the original to the food bank to make more when needed.

Learning Objective This activity is designed to explore ways in which conflict can be managed effectively. These are also activities which can be used directly with a troop.

Time Needed

35 minutes

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- If time is available, this is an excellent opportunity to provide a space for volunteers to discuss specific conflict situations where support may be needed and to crowd source potential resolutions.

Activity 1: Active Listening

Ask participants to form pairs and have one of them start by asking a question. The second person will either just answer the question, or answer and then ask another question. Subsequent questions must build on the existing topic - no topic changes allowed. See how long they can continue the dialogue from a starting point of one single question. Allow 4 minutes.

Repeat the above, but this time advise participants to ask open questions instead of closed (yes/no) questions.

Hold a group discussion. Ask: how challenging was this activity? What did you learn? How could you use open questions during a conflict?

Note: one of the most common reasons for conflict is because one or more of the parties has not actively listened. Active listening means listening to understand, not just to respond.

Activity 2: Debate vs Dialogue

Once again, ask participants to pair up. Have them stand facing each other and hold out one of their fists (as if they were playing rock, paper, scissors). Together, they will say "Nothing, something, anything!" and then they will say the name of the first object that comes into their head.

Allow 3 minutes for the pairs to debate with each other to argue that their item is better than the other person's item.

After 3 minutes, ask them to engage in dialogue this time. This means asking each other questions about their items, listening to the answers, and reaching an agreement.

Hold a group discussion. Explain that debate is an attempt to "win" and prove that your position is better, whereas dialogue is about understanding and cooperation. Ask: how did you feel/react to each situation? How would you behave in real conflict situations? How did things change when you switched to dialogue?

Discover: Learn techniques for managing conflict with and between others and for becoming an effective listener.

Connect: Active listening and dialogue bring us closer!

Take Action: these activities can be used with troops of appropriately-aged scouts to help them manage conflict.

Learning Objective

Adult volunteers will understand how and when to use games to re-invigorate their meetings.

Time Needed

25 minutes

Supplies

- Dependent on the game/s chosen - see attached sheet.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- Link the activity back to the purpose - games are a great way to provide a change of pace when needed, and to help bring troop members together.

Introduction

Games are an important way to incorporate movement breaks, recharge energy levels, help Girl Scouts maintain focus, and to have fun! There are different types of games which can be used for different purposes:

- Getting to Know You - helpful to introduce new members to the troop and for existing members to find more things they have in common.
- Wide Games - typically outdoors, using a large area. Helpful to burn off excess energy!
- Active Games - when a movement break is needed between activities, can recharge flagging energy.
- Team Building - problem solving and co-operative learning!

Activity: Try Some Games!

Select a variety of games to try out, dependent on the time allotted. See attached sheet for examples.

Debrief:

When would you use the different types of games? Ask volunteers for examples of which type of game might help in different scenarios.

E.g.

- If kids are finding it hard to focus on a meeting activity - pivot to an active game that doesn't need supplies.
- If activities are completed sooner than expected - add in any type of game.
- If cliques are forming and/or the troop is not getting along well - try team building and getting to know you games to reinforce connections.
- At the beginning of the year when new members have joined - use getting to know you games to introduce the troop.

Discover: Volunteers understand how to use games to keep their troop engaged.

Connect: Volunteers connect with each other and have an opportunity to make new friends by trying some games!

Take Action: Volunteers take the activities back to their troop and engage the troop members in learning new games.

You, Me, Left, Right (Name Game)

Have the group form in a circle, with the facilitator in the middle serving as the caller. Ask the people in the group to introduce themselves to the people on their left or right sides. Explain the person in the middle will point to some-one in the circle and say either “You”, “Me”, “Left”, or “Right” and count to five in a reasonable time.

“You” is the person being pointed at.

“Me” is the caller.

“Left” is the person to the left of the one being pointed at.

“Right” is the person to the right of the one being pointed at.

The person being pointed at must correctly name that person before the caller counts to five. If they succeed, the caller moves on to a different person of their choice. If they do not succeed, they become the caller.

Circle of Connection (Getting to Know You)

One person stands away from the group, facing them, and must say three things about themselves. As they say things, anyone can step forward and link arms with that person and explain how they are connected with something that was said. NB: only the first person to get to the original caller can link arms. If more than one person has something in common, unless they get there first they need to wait for another turn. The new person then says three things about themselves and another member of the group then connects (links arms) with that person. In the end, the last person keeps talking into they find a connection to the first person so that the entire group is a circle.

Be a Tree (General, movement)

In a large circle, first describe the three types of tree:

Redwood (arms up straight over head)

Oak (arms stretched outward as branches)

Willow (arms and head hanging downward)

Leader closes eyes and yells ‘be a tree’- everyone becomes a tree, and leader counts to 3 and then becomes a tree too. Anyone who is the same type of tree is out. Leader repeats until there is a winner and then that person becomes the Leader.

My Biggest Fan (General, Build Camaraderie)

Pair up and play Rock, Paper, Scissors. Winner (best of 3) plays someone else while loser becomes their cheerleader. They place hands on their shoulder and cheer them on. Each winner finds another winner to play against and the winner of this match-up then gains the loser and all their fans as their own fans. Comes down to finale between 2 people with huge cheer squads. Can be played several times in a row with multiple winners!

Peanut Butter and Jelly (General, re-focus)

Supplies: 2 balls (or objects to toss)

The group stands in a circle. The players start to toss one of the balls (“peanut butter”) around the circle from person to person. The second ball (“Jelly”) is then tossed from player to player in any direction.

The object is for Jelly to catch up with Peanut Butter. When one player catches both balls, everyone shouts “Peanut Butter and Jelly!” and then starts again.

Grandma's Underpants (General)

Form a circle. One person is IT.

Everyone else in the group will ask IT questions.

IT can only respond by saying, “Grandma’s Underpants”, while trying not to laugh.

The player who asks the question that makes IT laugh, gets to be IT next.

The Witch Says (Active)

One player is the witch. They will say “The Witch says _____ (any color they want).”

The players have to find something in the room that is that color. For example: “The Witch says blue.” Everyone finds something that is blue and touches it (e.g. chair, jacket, book, etc.).

The Witch chases the players and tries to tag them before they touch something of that color. If a player gets tagged, they are the new witch.

Rules: Two people cannot touch the same item, and they cannot go back to the same item over and over again (e.g. same blue chair every time “blue” is yelled out). Note: After primary colors are chosen, the witch will have to get creative saying things like silver, gold, light blue, light green, maroon, etc.)

Ship (Active)

The room becomes a boat.

Front = Bow

Back = Stern

Right = Port

Left = Starboard

Then teach the players different motions.

Hurricane – run side to side waving arms

Tornado – spin around

Climb the Rigging – motion like you are climbing a ladder

Captain’s Daughter – turn head and pat your hair

Hit the deck – fall to the ground on stomach

The game leader calls out different parts of the boat and the players should run to that part. “Bow” – players should run to the front of the room. If a player goes in a different direction, you can either make them “out” or just let them continue to play. As the leader continue to call out different parts of the boat, and the players run to those parts, the leader can call out “Hurricane” or “Tornado” and the players have to do those motions.

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to show volunteers how to use progression to gradually extend their troop's outdoor program.

Time Needed

15-40 minutes

Supplies

- Dependent on chosen activities - e.g. edible campfire supplies, lengths of rope for knots, compasses

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Ask volunteers with experience to lead different portions of the meeting.

Introduction

Progression allows youth to learn the skills they need to become competent in the outdoors, including how to plan and organize outdoor activities. By challenging them to take the next step, volunteers build on their troop's previously learned skills and allow them to grow in confidence.

Activity

Separate the attendees into level-specific groups (if you do not have enough people at each level, combine e.g. Daisy + Brownie, CSA). Ask them to spend 3 minutes brainstorming outdoor activities that would be appropriate for their level. They should include a variety of skill building (e.g. knots, campfires, knife skills), camping experiences (e.g. backyard camping, cabins, tents, backpacking), and adventure activities (e.g. climbing, trail riding, kayaking). Once they have brainstormed their list, allow 5 minutes for them to consider what skills or physical abilities youth would need to have developed prior to participating in some of the mentioned activities (e.g. campfires - youth should have learned how to safely strike a match. Archery - youth should be able to consistently follow direction and have developed the strength needed to draw the bow). Finally, a representative from each level should report out to the whole group.

Optional Additional Activities

The following activities (and any others you can think of!) can be used as desired to build a longer and more interactive meeting, and to provide ideas for troop volunteers to use with their troops to build outdoor skills indoors:

- Compass skills - provide a compass for each small group of 2-3 participants and call out directions for everyone to follow (e.g. take three large paces to the north west, align yourself north-south and do 3 star jumps).
- Edible campfires - provide materials and attached handout to each individual.
- Knots - provide lengths of rope and use knot games to teach knots (e.g. square knot relay, friendship circle closing).

Discover: Volunteers learn about progression in Girl Scouts.

Connect: Volunteers learn from each other as they brainstorm activities and skills.

Take Action: Leaders of younger troops are able to visualize how their Girl Scout activities will evolve.

Edible Campfires



Practice your outdoor skills indoors with this fun activity!

Supplies Needed:

- Paper plate or napkin (safety circle)
- Small Cup with water/juice (water bucket)
- Fork (rake or shovel)
- Toothpick (match)
- Mini marshmallows, jelly beans, M&M's, Cheerios/raisins/corn pops (fire ring)
- Potato sticks/shredded coconut/shredded lettuce/shredded cheese (tinder)
- Pretzel sticks/Chinese noodles/julienned carrots or green pepper (kindling)
- Pretzel logs/bread sticks/tootsie rolls/celery sticks/small carrots (fuel logs)
- Red Hots/red licorice (sparks, small flames)
- Candy corn/Swedish Fish (large flames)

Instructions:



1. Tie back long hair and clear your safety circle. Have your water and tools nearby, and make your ring.



2. Make an A frame with the logs, place your tinder inside and use the 'match' to add sparks.



3. Add kindling, leaving room for air to flow. Start adding some flames as your fire grows!

With a real fire, the water bucket would be used to put out the fire and the rake/shovel would be used to stir up the coals until cold to the touch, but in this case, eat your fire and drink from your bucket. Be sure to leave a clean area when you're done!



Partnering With Parents: Preparing for a Parent Meeting



Learning Objective

This activity is designed to teach leaders the importance of a parent meeting to kick off their year, and help them develop an agenda and parent agreement.

Time Needed

15-20 minutes

Supplies

- Handouts - 'Make Her Experience Memorable' and 'Be a Part of Her Girl Scout Adventure'
- Paper
- Pens

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Introduction

100% of troops with the most satisfied troop leaders and parents report that they hold a parent/caregiver meeting at least once per year. Leaders may not be aware of the importance of a parent meeting to begin their Girl Scout year.

Activities

Lead a discussion with the whole group to reiterate the importance of hosting a parent meeting at the beginning of the year, and to identify important agenda items for the meeting, e.g.

- Meeting schedule and location/s
- Anticipated activities - overview of year plan
- Forms
- Volunteer support needs (see handout - Make Her Experience Memorable)
- Financial planning - budget and bank balance
- Reminder of what youth-led will look like at this age and the role of the parent/caregiver
- Parent agreement

Separate into level-specific groups and work together to come up with a sample parent agreement for the upcoming year to present at their parent meeting. A few examples to suggest if they are stuck:

- Timely drop off and pick-up
- Submit money and forms by the due date
- Volunteer responsibilities dependent on the troop
- Being an active partner in their child's Girl Scout experience

Remember that a parent agreement will be specific to the needs of each troop so one size is unlikely to fit all. Leaders should be encouraged to personalize their agreement to fit their needs.

Discover: Volunteers understand the importance of the parent meeting and how to develop an agenda.

Connect: Volunteers learn how to connect and partner with their troop adults.

Take Action: leave with a sample agenda and parent agreement to put into action.

BE A PART OF HER GIRL SCOUT ADVENTURE

Seeing you step up and get involved in her Girl Scout experience will give your girl a special sense of pride. Here's how you can play an active role in her troop and enhance the power of Girl Scouting at home—all while having fun, making memories, and strengthening your bond.

- **Create community**

Communication goes both ways! Your troop leaders will keep you up to date on troop projects and activities via social media, email, and in-person chats. Don't be shy about being a part of those conversations, chiming in with ideas, or asking questions or airing concerns if any should arise. Likewise, getting to know the parents and caregivers of the other girls can help strengthen the troop—and you just might make some new friends in the process!

- **Talk the talk**

Choose one or two things your girl learned about while earning her most recent badge or award and ask her to explain them to you. Letting her share her knowledge as an “expert” will both help cement these new ideas in her memory and give her a sense of pride.

- **Walk the walk**

One of the best ways to help your girl gain leadership skills is by modeling them for her yourself as a troop volunteer. Offer to coordinate the carpool schedule, help with snacks, chaperone a trip, or even to lead a particular badge activity during a meeting. Watching you take on a leadership role—and becoming a role model to the other girls in the troop!—will motivate her to take the lead, too.

There are so many ways to play a meaningful role in her Girl Scout experience—the sky's the limit!

Ready to sign up as a volunteer?

<https://girlscouts.secure.force.com/>

Need to update your girl's registration or register her for the first time?

<https://girlscouts.secure.force.com/girl>

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to help volunteers become more familiar with Safety Activity Checkpoints, their uses, and the information found on them.

Time Needed

20-30 minutes

Supplies

- Printed copies of attached Safety Activity Checkpoints - one of each per group.
- Printed copies of quiz - one per group.
- Pencils or pens
- Prizes (e.g. fun-size candy bars)

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.

Introduction

NB: if possible, you may wish to have online access to the Safety Activity Checkpoints available, as there is significant printing involved for this activity.

Ask the group to raise their hands if they are familiar with and have used the Safety Activity Checkpoints. For those who are unfamiliar, explain that these are safety guidelines and tips for Girl Scout activities and should always be checked prior to planning any activity for a troop. They contain important information such as whether or not an activity needs council approval, and what program level activities are suitable for.

Activity

Split the attendees into pairs or smaller groups of 3-4 people. Give each group a copy of each of the sample Safety Activity Checkpoints as well as a quiz sheet and a pen or pencil. Explain that they will be answering questions about the information found on the Safety Activity Checkpoints and that there will be prizes (it's up to you if you want to distribute prizes based on number of correct answers, speed, based on answers given after raising hands etc.)

Discussion

Bring the group together and discuss their findings. Ask: were any of the answers surprising? What other information do Safety Activity Checkpoints include? Why is it important to always consult the Safety Activity Checkpoint before planning an activity with your troop?

Discover: Volunteers become more familiar with the use of Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Connect: Volunteers work together to find and discuss quiz answers.

Take Action: troops become more safety conscious in activity planning.



Safety Activity Checkpoints Quiz

1. Girl Scout Juniors can go ax throwing (circle the correct answer).
True False
2. How long should you allow for processing of a vendor that is not yet on the approved vendor list?
3. Daisies are not yet old enough to be allowed to go camping (circle the correct answer).
True False
4. How long in advance should the Trip or High Adventure Approval Form be submitted?
5. Is a Trip or High Adventure Approval Form be completed for a Daisy troop to do a nature scavenger hunt in a local park?
6. How many adult watchers are needed for a troop of 12 Brownies swimming at a local pool with a lifeguard?
7. Name 3 types of safety gear needed for a hiking trip.
8. What in-person training course is needed for at least one adult attending a camping trip?
9. Why should only vendors on the approved vendor list be used for high adventure activities?
10. Under what conditions is diving prohibited?
11. Safety Activity Checkpoints are only available for high adventure activities (circle the correct answer).
True False



Safety Activity Checkpoints Answers

1. Girl Scout Juniors can go ax throwing (circle the correct answer).

True

False

This is false - the activity is approved for Cadettes and up.

2. How long should you allow for processing of a vendor that is not yet on the approved vendor list?

8-12 weeks

3. Daisies are not yet old enough to be allowed to go camping (circle the correct answer).

True

False

This is false - Daisies can camp for one night if they are ready.

4. How long in advance should the Trip or High Adventure Approval Form be submitted?

4-6 weeks

5. Is a Trip or High Adventure Approval Form be completed for a Daisy troop to do a nature scavenger hunt in a local park?

No - this is a short walk, not a hike.

6. How many adult watchers are needed for a troop of 12 Brownies swimming at a local pool with a lifeguard?

2 adult watchers in addition to the lifeguard.

7. Name 3 types of safety gear needed for a hiking trip.

Any 3 of: water bottles, sturdy footwear, map, compass, flashlight, whistle, pocket knife, cell phone, emergency survival kit.

8. What in-person training course is needed for at least one adult attending a camping trip?

Camp Out training

9. Why should only vendors on the approved vendor list be used for high adventure activities?

These vendors meet safety and insurance requirements for the activity.

10. Under what conditions is diving prohibited?

In water of unknown depth or conditions.

11. Safety Activity Checkpoints are only available for high adventure activities (circle the correct answer).

True

False

False - Safety Activity Checkpoints are available for many different activities, not all of which are high adventure.

Safety Activity Checkpoint **Ax, Knife, & Hatchet Throwing**

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required
First-Aider Required

Council Approval: Required
Activity Permitted For: C S A



About Ax, Knife, and Hatchet Throwing

Some of the oldest weapons, tools, and hunting methods include the ax, knife, and hatchet and they are still used for their traditional purposes in some areas today. Learning how to handle them safely by aiming at targets for accuracy is also common today as a recreational and competitive activity. It is an ideal way to learn how to handle these tools safely, tools that can be used in the great outdoors and wilderness excursions.

Good throwing requires learning positive traits such as patience, determination, focus, attention to detail, discipline, and persistence. Since these skills are likewise key elements of leadership and confidence, we encourage our girls to take what disciplines they learn from any sport or activity and apply it to their participation in their communities and the world.

There are a variety of styles and sizes of axes, knives, and hatchets. The ones the girls will be learning about are designed for the express purpose of hitting a target.

Learn More:

- [World Ax Throwing League \(WATL\)](#)
- [National Axe Throwing Federation](#)
- [American Knife Throwers Alliance](#)

Making Activities Accessible

In order to make your activity accessible to girls of all abilities, it's important to communicate with all girl attendees and their caregivers to learn about and accommodate their varied support needs. For resources and information on accessible sport and adventure activities, visit [Move United](#).

Equity

In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the girls in your troop that could affect a girl's ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with girls and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all girls and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as the proper equipment, prior experiences, and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Standard Safety Guidelines. Refer to the "Standard Safety Guidelines" in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines, always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Review the "Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts" section in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) under the "Standard Safety Guidelines" section and be certain to consult with [GSNorCal's specific COVID-19 guidance](#). When applicable, always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong, such as, an accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Assess participants' maturity level. Participants must be old enough to understand safety procedures and handle equipment so as not to endanger themselves and others.

Verify instructor knowledge and experience. One adult needs to be trained and experienced in ax, hatchet, or knife throwing safety (depending on which you are doing), form and technique, range rules specifications, and emergency procedures.

Note: The instructor-to-participant ratio is not the same as the adult-to-girl ratio found in [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints 2021-2022](#). You must follow the Target Sports—Master Progression Chart. However, both ratios must be complied with when girls are participating in throwing sports. For example, if 15 Cadettes are on the throwing line, there must be two instructors plus eight adult Girl Scout volunteers (who are not instructors) who are present during the activity.

Select a safe site. Check [GSNorCal's Approved Vendor List](#). When using a vendor, ensure that:

- If choosing a vendor that is not currently on the approved vendor list, please allow 8-12 weeks for approval and addition of the vendor. Vendor approval is not guaranteed, and is dependent on the vendors' interest in partnering with GSNorCal.
- Equipment should be stored in a box, closet, or cabinet and locked when not in use.
- Equipment, including targets, are checked each time and in good condition.
- Range rules and throwing command controls are clearly posted and taught to all participants in advance of stepping on to the range.

- Clear safety signals and range commands to control the activity are posted and taught to all participants in advance of stepping on to the range.
- Backstops or a specific safety zone is set behind the targets.
- Clearly delineated rear and side safety buffers are known to the entire facility population.
- The shooting line is clearly defined.

At an indoor range, make sure that:

Indoor Range Specific Guidelines: [WATL for Indoor Range Information](#)

Note: For hatchet throwing, indoor ceilings must be a minimum of 12 feet high; metal chain link 15-foot floor-to-ceiling partitions must separate sets of two targets; and within a set of two targets, there must be a 6-foot floor-to-ceiling partition between the targets.

- Each throwing area is designated as a throwing lane.
- A regulation lane for competition must contain 2 targets.
- Fences or walls block this area from the rest of the facility to keep throwers and axes all contained in a safe environment.
- Only the two participating throwers and the axe-throwing coach are allowed inside the lane at one time. This includes ensuring the area behind the throwers is clear of any other person up to 5'.
- 10 ft minimum/clear ceiling height (within the throwing lane) is recommended for safety reasons.
- Targets are well-lit
- Doors or entries to the range are locked or blocked from the inside.
- Fire exits are not blocked.

At an outdoor range, check that:

Outdoor Range Specific Guidelines: [WATL for Outdoor Range Information](#)

- Each throwing area is designated as a throwing lane.
- There needs to be a marker of 12 ft from the targets to designate the safe zone.
- Only the two participating throwers and the supervisor are allowed inside the lane at one time. This includes ensuring the area behind the throwers is clear of any other person up to 6'.
- There needs to be 8ft tall fencing on the sides around the throwing area. This fencing must cover at least 15 ft to the front of the targets and connect to the fencing behind the targets with the back fencing.
- There needs to be 8ft tall fencing covering behind the target
- If the targets are not fully enclosed in fencing with a ceiling, then there must be fencing at least 10 ft away behind the targets
- Under no circumstances can spectators or the public be allowed to walk behind the target, even behind the 8ft tall fencing area
- If there is any reason to go behind the targets, it will only be by an authorized facilitator. Axes must all be put down any time a facilitator is behind a target.

Ensure equipment is properly sized for the girls and is made for throwing. Knives should be between 9 to 16 inches and not overly sharp. Hatchet heads should weigh between 1.25 and 1.75 pounds, the handle should be wood, length must be at least 13 inches, including the handle in the eye of the blade and the face (blade) of the axe must be no longer than 4 inches and not overly sharp.

Girls should learn about throwing. Girls develop skills based on proper procedures and form, handling the equipment, getting the right stance, sighting, and observing safety practices.

Always keep the knife/hatchet pointed in a safe direction. This is the primary rule of target sport safety. A “safe direction” means that the knife/hatchet is handled so that even if it were to be dropped or slipped out of the thrower’s grip it would not cause injury or damage. The key to this rule is to control your actions at all times.

Ensure that equipment to be used is in good condition. Make sure that the equipment is clean, in good working order, and that nothing is broken or loose. Targets and backstops for targets are in good repair.

Dress appropriately for the activity. Make sure girls and adults avoid wearing dangling earrings, bracelets, and necklaces that may become entangled in equipment. Also, have girls tie back long hair. Make sure girls and adults are wearing closed-toed shoes.

Plan in advance. Call ahead to determine any special suggestions from the vendor or facility.

Ensure the instructor reviews all rules, range, and operating procedures with participants beforehand.

Safety and Required Gear

- Axes, knives, hatchets
- Targets (positioned at recommended/safe distance)
- Hard shoes (to protect feet from bounce backs)
- Gloves (may be provided)

Target Sports -

Ax, Knife, and Hatchet Throwing Progression Chart

Shooting Type	Grade Level/ Minimum Age	Participant-to- Instructor Ratio	Instructor/Expert Certification
Ax/ Knife/ Hatchet Throwing	C S A	8:1	One adult trained in throwing safety for equipment you are using, form and technique, range rules, and emergency procedures. In addition, one adult for every eight Cadettes, Seniors or Ambassadors is required.

Girl Scouts of Northern California’s Approval Process for Tomahawk, Knife, and Hatchet Throwing

Ax, Knife, and Hatchet Throwing are considered high-adventure activity and must be pre-approved by the council.

- **Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form:** Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity. Gather the following information to complete this form:
 - ☐ Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California and have a current background check. Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
 - ☐ Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes

from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop. See [Volunteer Essentials](#) for information about first-aid standards and training

- Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for the courses below on [GSNorCal's Training Section](#) of the website.
 - For example, the [Camp Out course](#) is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.
 - The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.
 - The **Backpacking course** is required before you take girls on an overnight backpacking adventure.
- **High-Adventure Approved Vendor List:** GSNorCal troops/groups must select a high-adventure vendor from the [High-Adventure Approved Vendor List](#), which consists of organizations that meet Girl Scouts safety and insurance requirements for the activity. For the safety of our members, before a troop uses a high-adventure site/vendor for a troop or service unit event, the council must approve the high-adventure site/vendor. This process is designed to ensure a safe experience and protect the council's and volunteer's legal interests.

Safety Activity Checkpoint

Camping

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required
First-Aider Required



Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A

Required: At least one adult who will be involved in planning the camping trip with the girls and will be accompanying them on their camping adventure must complete the “Camp Out” course as required by GSNorCal. Visit [GSNorCal’s Training Section](#) of the website for more information.

About Camping

Camping, a great Girl Scout tradition, is one of the very first activities that Girl Scouts’ founder Juliette Gordon Low encouraged for girls. The key to an enjoyable camping experience is being prepared—by packing just enough gear, supplies, and weather-appropriate clothing. Girl Scouts advocate for the Leave No Trace method of camping, which involves leaving a campground the way it exists in nature, free of garbage and human impact.

You can add to the experience with a camp Kaper chart. Divide cooking duties and get creative about preplanning outdoor meals. Be ready with camp entertainment. Before you go camping, read about camping stories, songs, activities, and games.

Note: When planning activities to do while camping, remember that girls are never allowed to hunt, go on high altitude climbs, or ride all-terrain vehicles or motor bikes.

For travel camping—camping as you travel—note the additional safety precautions listed.

Learn More:

- [American Camp Association](#)
- [Go Camping America](#)
- [Leave No Trace](#)
- [ACA Coronavirus Safety at Camp](#)

Coronavirus Safety at Camp

More information can be found on our GSNorCal webpage in the section called, [Coronavirus Updates: Working Together to Keep Our GSNorCal Community Healthy](#).

The health and safety of Girl Scouts at camp has always been and continues more than ever to be our highest priority. All the health and safety precautions taken to keep girls healthy and safe have never been more important as the world returns to what is likely the new normal, after months of shelter in place in most communities.

As with any Girl Scout activity, adults and girls should be very mindful to abide by the guidance that has been issued by the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) for integrating back into regular life, which is to practice the basics:

The American Camp Association has provided an excellent source of guidance at: [COVID-19 Resource Center for Camps](#). Adults and girls should learn and follow the guidance set forth here by the American Camp Association. Informative and helpful topic-specific links from the [COVID-19 Resource Center for Camps](#) are here:

[Health and Wellness](#)

[Ways to Promote a Child's Resilience](#)

Implement practices that minimize potential for communicable disease once camp is in session:

- Wear a mask and have girls wear a mask.
- Practice social distancing and proper spacing between campers.
- Encourage appropriate hand washing and/or hand sanitizing at regular intervals throughout the day. This assumes adequate wash basins and/or sanitizing pumps are at key locations.
- Cough/sneeze “into your sleeve.” Covering coughs/sneezes with one’s hands is no longer desired behavior; bury coughs/sneezes in one’s shoulder. Note: view “[Why Don’t We Do It in Our Sleeves?](#)” on YouTube.
- Remind everyone to keep their hands away from their faces.
- Make it a camp rule that personal supplies – hairbrushes, pillows, caps, contact lens solutions, make-up, etc. belong to the owner and should not be shared with others.
- Make it regular practice that one drinks only from one’s personal drinking cup or water bottle, no sharing, even “to be nice.”
- Increase the social distance between people, especially in dining rooms.
- Sleep head-to-toe rather than nose-to-nose – in bunks, tents & so forth. Go for the greatest distance between sleeping heads.
- Direct Health Center staff to isolate people with any symptoms of illness until communicable illness can be ruled out.
- For resident camps: maintain distance, ideally six feet, between beds and sleep head-to-toe (top bunk has the person’s head at one end, the bottom bunk has the person’s head at the other end). Utilize universal precautions – for and by everyone. *See the ACA Operating Guidance for specific recommendations by state. [State Operating Guidance for Summer 2021 | American Camp Association \(acacamps.org\)](#)

- Instruct staff to direct campers complaining of gastro-intestinal upset to the Health Center for assessment. Do not wait for kids to throw up!
- Make certain that food service staff know and implement safe food handling practices, i.e. ServSafe
- Avoid being indoors. Move all program activities to the outdoors and only go inside when absolutely necessary. Ensure increased ventilation in any indoor spaces that must be used.
- When food service personnel have questionable symptoms, especially those associated with the gastro-intestinal tract, keep them away from food preparation until appropriately improved.

Camping with Daisies and Brownies

A Daisy troop may participate in an overnight camping experience if the girls are ready. Troops may want to try a backyard sleep out and progress to a “family camp-out” before the girls participate in an overnight event. Troops might consider a stay in yurts and/or cabins for a night on one of our GSNorCal properties as a first step towards sleeping in tents. *Daisies cannot participate in overnight camping trips longer than two nights.*

A Daisy troop may participate in an overnight camping experience. Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights.

Travel camping is not recommended for Daisies and Brownies.

Know where to camp when camping with Daisies and Brownies, which includes Girl Scout camps; public, private, state, and national parks; and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities.

Connect with Girl Scouts of Northern California for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned site. Before searching for campground locations, please review the [GSNorCal Approved Vendor List](#).

Making Activities Accessible

In order to make your activity accessible to girls of all abilities, it's important to communicate with all girl attendees and their caregivers to learn about and accommodate their varied support needs. For resources and information on accessible sport and adventure activities, visit [Move United](#).

Equity

In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the girls in your troop that could affect a girl's ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with girls and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all girls and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as the proper equipment, prior experiences, and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Standard Safety Guidelines. Refer to the “Standard Safety Guidelines” in the *Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints* which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines, always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Review the “Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts” section in the *Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints* under the “Standard Safety Guidelines” section and be certain to consult with [GSNorCal's specific COVID-19 guidance](#). When applicable, always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time

before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, breakdown, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or illness.

Safe camping locations are Girl Scout camps; public, private, state, and national parks; and sites deemed appropriate by local and state authorities. Connect with Girl Scouts of Northern California for site suggestions and for information on using a non-council-owned sites.

Verify leader/instructor knowledge, experience, judgment, and maturity. Ensure that at least one adult is trained or possesses knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- Outdoor program activities and leadership
- Girls' emotional responses to trips, including homesickness
- Trip planning in a girl-led environment
- Safety management
- Program activities specific to the trip
- Group dynamics and management
- Outdoor cooking (if relevant)

Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in [GSNorCal's Training Section](#) of the website. The [Camp Out Course](#) is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.

Ensure that supervision of girls and adults for travel camping include at least two adults who are additionally trained, or have documented experience, in the following areas:

- Participation in similar trips
- Familiarity with the area in which the trip is conducted
- Physical fitness and skills necessary to support the group
- Chosen mode(s) of transportation
- Site orientation
- Emergency procedures
- Minor maintenance for equipment and vehicles, as appropriate

If travel camping (using campsites as a means of accommodations), verify the following adult certifications and standards:

- For trips by small craft, one adult is currently certified as required by the safety activity checkpoints for the particular mode of transportation being used (canoe or kayak, for instance).
- For trips that involve swimming, one adult in attendance is currently certified in basic lifeguarding.
- Each driver of motorized transportation is at least 21 years old and holds a valid license appropriate to the vehicle.
- No adult drives more than six hours per day, with rest breaks every two hours.
- If a trailer is used, it complies with all state, local, and federal regulations for the areas of travel. The assigned driver is experienced in pulling a trailer. No girls or adult leaders ride in the trailer.
- No caravanning (cars following closely together, with the lead vehicle in charge) is allowed. Each driver must have information about route and destination in addition to the cell phone numbers of other drivers.
- Ensure that girl and adult participants receive information about first-aid procedures, emergency and rescue procedures, environmental awareness, and program plans for mode of travel and geographic area, as well as operational procedures (water purification, food preparation, camping equipment, sanitation, and food storage procedures).

Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in [GSNorCal's Training Section](#) of the website. The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.

Sleeping Arrangements

On trips where male volunteers are part of the group, it is not appropriate for them to sleep in the same space as girl members. Always support and maintain an all-girl atmosphere for sleeping quarters. Men may participate only when separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use. In some circumstances, such public venues as a museum or mall overnight with hundreds of girls, this type of accommodation may not be possible. If this is the case, men do not supervise girls in the sleeping area of the event and the adult-volunteer-to-girl ratio is adjusted accordingly.

Always avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. An exception is made for family members during events, such as adult-girl or family overnights where one family may sleep together in an area specifically designated to accommodate families. Also, please note the following:

- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Girls and adults do not share a bed; however, GSNorCal makes exceptions for mothers and daughters.
- It is not necessary that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, or designated area) with the girls. Adults should be within a reasonable distance to respond to emergencies without infringing on participant privacy. If an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
- In the case of transgender or transitioning girl members or adult members, sleeping arrangements should reflect their identified gender, (i.e. transgender males should have separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms for their use).

If possible, men should have their own designated bathroom. If a unisex bathroom is used, the door must have a working lock, or a system for notifying others that the bathroom is in use. This system should be reviewed and understood by all girls and adults.

Men should not have to walk through the girls' sleeping area to get to the bathroom. When camping in tents or single room cabins, men must stay in a tent or a cabin that is separate from the girls or women.

During family or "he and me" events (in which girls share sleeping accommodations with parent/guardian), ensure the sleeping details are clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip.

More than one family may use a tent or single-room cabin during these events only if both families agree.

In public venue overnights, such as museums or at malls, ask if there is a separate sleeping area and bathrooms for men. If no such area exists, designate an area out of the way or off to the side so that men are not sleeping alongside the girls.

For long-distance travel, men must have separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms away from girls. Each participant should have her own bed. If girls want to share a bed, they must obtain parent/guardian permission. Girls and adults may not share a bed, however, though GSNorCal may make exceptions for mothers and daughters.

Women are not required to sleep in the sleeping area (for example, a tent or cabin) with girls, but if a woman does share the sleeping area, two unrelated women must always be present.

For sites without electric lights and toilet facilities (otherwise known as primitive campsites):

- Choose and set up your campsite well before dark.
- Use a previously established campsite if available.
- Make sure the campsite is level, below tree line, and located at least 200 feet away from all water sources.
- Avoid fragile mountain meadows and areas with wet soil.
- Avoid camping under dead tree limbs.
- Use existing fire rings if a fire is necessary.
- If a latrine is not available, use individual cat holes—holes for human waste that are at least 200 feet away from the trail and known water sources—to dispose of human waste. *Note:* Cat holes are not permitted in some areas, so follow local sanitary codes or alternative instructions in those areas.
- Wash dishes and do personal bathing at least 200 feet away from water sources.
- Store food in a secure location away from tents and out of reach of animals.
- Where necessary, use a bear-proof container to store food or, if allowed or appropriate, hang food at least ten (10) feet off the ground from a rope that is stretched between two trees. If the site is in bear country, check with local authorities for additional precautions.

Prepare for Emergencies

Ensure the presence of a waterproof first-aid kit and a first aider with a current certificate in first aid (including adult and child CPR or CPR/AED), who is prepared to handle cases caused by extremes of temperature, such as heat exhaustion, heat stroke, frostbite, cold exposure, and hypothermia, as well as sprains, fractures, and altitude sickness. Ensure that emergency transportation is available. If any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider with wilderness first-aid certification. See **Volunteer Essentials** for information about first-aid standards and training. The designated adult should have a working cell phone for emergencies. Consider bringing walkie-talkies with you for areas that do not have cell phone service. [\[SAFETYWISE: First Aid & First Aiders\]](#)

Safety Gear

Camping requires various equipment dependent on the length of trip, location, and weather. This might include (assess for your specific trip):

- Clothing, including a rain jacket or poncho that can be layered and is appropriate for the weather
- Socks with sturdy shoes, hiking boots, or sneakers (no sandals, clogs, flip-flops, or bare feet)
- A sleeping bag that's rated for the anticipated temperature
- A flashlight and other battery-powered lights for indoor use (no candles, kerosene lamps, portable cook stoves, heaters, or other open-flame devices are to be used inside tents)
- A first-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- A hat or bandana
- A hat, gloves, and thermal underwear for cool temperatures
- Flame-resistant tents or tarp (no plastic tents)
- A map and either a compass or a GPS
- Mosquito netting, where necessary
- Cooking supplies: pots, pans, utensils, mess kit, dunk bag, etc.
- A cooler for food storage
- Portable cook stove and fuel, whenever possible (to reduce the use of firewood; please note firewood burning restrictions applied in certain City/County/State jurisdictions)
- A flashlight or propane-fueled lantern (for outdoor use)
- A water purification kit

Girl Scouts of Northern California's Approval Process for Camping

Camping is considered a high-adventure activity and must be pre-approved by the council.

- **Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form:** Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity. Gather the following information to complete this form:
 - ☐ Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California and have a current background check. Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
 - ☐ Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop.
 - ☐ Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for the courses below on [GSNorCal's Training Section](#) of the website.
 - The **Camp Out course** is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.
 - The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.
 - The **Backpacking course** is required before you take girls on an overnight backpacking adventure.
- **High-Adventure Approved Vendor List:** If using an outside vendor for camping or other activities, GSNorCal troops must select a high-adventure vendor from the [High-Adventure Approved Vendor List](#), which consists of organizations that meet Girl Scouts safety and insurance requirements for the activity. For the safety of our members, before a troop uses a high-adventure site/vendor for a troop or service unit event, the council must approve the high-adventure site/vendor. This process is designed to ensure a safe experience and protect GSNorCal's and volunteer's legal interests.

Council Approval: Not required

Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A

Note: Daisies are only permitted when working with older girls and adults as part of another outdoor activity.



About Geocaching

Geocaching is a recreational outdoor activity that centers on the use of a global positioning system (GPS) device and maps. Geocachers seek out caches (waterproof containers containing logbooks, and/or trinkets) that have been hidden just about anywhere in the world, whether in urban areas, in the wilderness, in tree roots, and so on. As treasure hunters in an international game of hide-and-seek, participants use geocaching to select cache locations and communicate with other geocachers.

When on private or government property, follow all posted rules, guidelines, and etiquette. Geocaching outlines locations that are prohibited for placing a cache.

“Cache in, trash out” is the motto when practicing Leave No Trace—geocachers are encouraged to leave caching sites cleaner than they found them and pick up garbage left by others. Geocachers are invited to participate in International Cache-In Trash-Out events, which are worldwide clean up efforts.

Finding a benchmark is key to geocaching. Using a GPS device or directions provided by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Geodetic Survey](#) (NGS), you can seek out NGS survey markers and other items that have been marked in the United States.

Girls develop skills about GPS use, latitude and longitude, and reading maps based on grade level. Ideally, each girl is able to use her own GPS device, or two to three girls can share one. It becomes more difficult for girls to actively participate in the geocaching activity when more than three participants share a GPS device. Keep in



mind that a GPS device provides a direct line measurement from the starting point to a destination; a GPS does not include the distance around path obstructions such as bodies of water.

Learn more:

- [Official global GPS cache site](#)
- [Geocaching.com](#)
- [Navicache](#)
- [Terracaching](#)

Making Activities Accessible

In order to make your activity accessible to girls of all abilities, it's important to communicate with all girl attendees and their caregivers to learn about and accommodate their varied support needs. For resources and information on accessible sport and adventure activities, visit [Move United](#).

Additional Resources:

See [HandiCaching.com](#) to find out about geocaching for people of all abilities.

Equity

In addition to physical and social-emotional disabilities, consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the girls in your troop that could affect a girl's ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with girls and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all girls and their families feel comfortable that they have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as the proper equipment, prior experiences, and skills needed to enjoy the activity.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Standard Safety Guidelines. Refer to the "Standard Safety Guidelines" in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) which apply to all Girl Scout gatherings and activities. When the adult-to-girl ratio, or other safety parameters, are stricter for a specific activity than in the Standard Safety Guidelines, always follow the stricter parameters in the activity chapter.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Review the "Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts" section in the [Introduction to Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) under the "Standard Safety Guidelines" section and be certain to consult with [GSNorCal's specific COVID-19 guidance](#). When applicable, always call ahead to the vendor, property or facility involved to check for their COVID-19 safety requirements as you prepare to take girls for this activity.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Girls should learn and understand terrain difficulty ratings. As appropriate for their grade level, girls can plan or have input about where to cache and which caches to locate by reading descriptions of the caches as well as ratings about difficulty and terrain. Explain about the terrain of a geocaching site by learning about the Difficulty/Terrain (D/T) Rating ahead of time.

The ratings, which range from 1/1 to 5/5, measure the level of difficulty for finding a cache and for navigating the terrain to the cache. A terrain rating of one typically means the cache is accessible for people of all abilities.

Dress appropriately for the activity. Make sure girls and adults avoid wearing dangling earrings, bracelets, and necklaces that may become entangled in underbrush in wilderness areas. Make sure footwear—consider sneakers versus hiking boots—is appropriate to the location(s) in which you will be geocaching.

Be on lookout for sharp edges, branches, cliffs, animals, or insects or anything that may pose a safety hazard or detour for the group. Be sure to practice Leave No Trace while geocaching so as not to disturb wildlife, trample vegetation, or cross onto private property. Carry out all garbage and discard, as appropriate.

Practice safe geocaching. To prevent injury when searching for caches, inspect areas with care before trekking into potentially dangerous locations or placing hands into unknown nooks and crannies, such as, ground holes, ponds, creeks, or urban buildings and structures.

Have a Troop First-Aider present. Troop First Aiders are required for troop/group activities as required for certain Safety Activity Checkpoints including camping, travel and high-adventure activities. [[SAFETYWISE: First Aid & First Aiders](#)] Learn more on how to become a Troop First-Aider by logging into [GSNorCal's Training Section](#) of the website.

Safety Gear

The gear you will need depends on the length of your trip, the location, and weather.

- GPS device
- Compass (for emergencies if going to an unknown or wilderness area)
- Map (for emergencies if going to an unknown or wilderness area)
- Cache coordinates/details uploaded to the GPS device or written out
- First-aid kit
- A working cell phone for emergencies (carried by an adult) or a specific backup plan. You might want to consider using long-range walkie-talkies for those areas where cell coverage may be spotty.
- Whistle for wilderness areas
- Clothing appropriate for the activity and weather
- Reusable water bottle
- Swag (or “stuff we all get”), which are the items that geocachers place into caches—usually small plastic toys, key chains, sunglasses—for other geocachers to take once they’ve located a cache
- Topographical and/or standard map of geocaching area if going to an unknown area
- Daypack to carry personal belongings
- Hiking boots for wilderness areas or comfortable and sturdy closed-toe walking shoes for urban environments



Safety Activity Checkpoint Hiking

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required

Council Approval: Required
Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A



About Hiking

Unlike short walks, hiking may involve lengthy, back-country walking trips and often requires sturdy boots to provide traction on rocks and uneven trail beds. When practicing Leave No Trace skills while hiking, it is important for hikers to leave trails as—or better than—they found them. Although the action of one hiker may not strongly affect the environment, the effects of large groups of hikers can degrade trails.

Hiking is the ideal opportunity for girls to learn and practice map and compass skills. Before heading out on a lengthy hike, learn how to read a map and use a compass. Look at a map to understand where you started and where you plan to finish. You can always check with your local, state, or national park for interesting and exciting trail ideas.

Note: For overnight hiking experiences, follow the guidance in the [Backpacking](#), [Camping](#) and [Trips and Travel Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).

Learn More:

- Make an emergency survival kit: [REI](#)
- Locate hiking areas near U.S. metropolitan areas: [All Trails](#)
- [American Hiking Society](#)
- [Leave No Trace](#)

Include Girls with Disabilities and/or Special Needs

Talk to girls with disabilities and/or special needs and/or their caregivers, and ask about needs and accommodations. If visiting a national park, contact the park in advance to ask about accommodating people with disabilities and/or special needs.

See [Disabled Sports USA](#) to find out about hiking for people of all abilities.

Safety Activity Checkpoint

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Girls should plan the activity. Encourage girls to plan routes, activities, and guidelines for dealing with problems that may arise with other groups of hikers.

Prompt girls to share resources. Encourage girls to distribute a list of hiking gear and supplies, and to determine which resources can be shared. Be sure girls and adults have a good understanding of how to practice the Leave No Trace principles on the hike.

Choose an appropriate hiking route. The hikers should know terrain, mileage, and hiking time in advance. Hikes are restricted to a reasonable length as determined by age, level of experience, nature of the terrain, physical condition of the hikers, disabilities, weather conditions, and time of day. The hiking pace must always accommodate the slowest hiker.

Assess safety of hiking routes. The route needs to be known to at least one of the adults or a report is obtained in advance to assess potential hazards, such as poisonous plants, indigenous or dangerous animals, unsafe drinking water, cliffs, and drop-offs. Ensure that a land-management or similar agency is contacted during the trip planning stage to determine available routes, recommended group size, water quantity and quality, and which permits are needed.

Ensure that hikers have a comprehensive understanding of the trip. Group members are trained to be observant of the route, surroundings, and fatigue of individuals. Instruction is given on the safety rules for hiking, such as staying together in a group, recognizing poisonous plants and biting or stinging insects and ticks, respecting wild animals, practicing Leave No Trace, and behaving effectively in emergencies. Ensure that girls, based on their level, know how to read maps, use a compass, navigate a route, and estimate distance.

Respect the environment and keep trails clean. Use the principles of Leave No Trace. Carry out food and all trash. Hike on established trails. Do not remove natural materials, such as leaves or branches. In addition, avoid eating wild foods, walking on or uprooting plants, interfering with or feeding wild animals, and littering.

Practice safe hiking. Instructions should be given on the safety rules for hiking, which include forbidding hiking off the trail and after dusk. Girls should stay on the pathway to avoid trampling trailside plants and causing erosion. In addition, be sure to take adequate rest periods with time to replenish fluids and eat high-energy food (such as fruits and nuts). Girls must take proper precautions in areas where poisonous plants, snakes, or ticks are prevalent.

Safety Gear

The gear you will need will depend on the length of your trip, the location, and weather.

- A water bottle or hydration pack with enough water for each girl for the length of the hike
- Sturdy footwear based on the type of trails and length of the hike
- Map and compass or GPS device
- Flashlight, whistle, pocket knife
- A working cell phone held by designated adult for emergencies
- An emergency survival kit

Girl Scouts of Northern California's Approval Process for Hiking

Hiking is considered a high-adventure activity and must be pre-approved by the council.

- **Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form:** Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity. Gather the following information to complete this form:

- ❑ Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California and have a current background check. Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
 - ❑ Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop.
 - ❑ Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in your [Volunteer Learning Portal](#) in the section called Trip & Outdoor Advisor.
 - For example, the **Camp Out course** is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.
 - The **Extended Trips course** is required for troops traveling three (3) nights or more.
 - The **Backpacking course** is required before you take girls on an overnight backpacking adventure.
- **High-Adventure Approved Vendor List:** GSNorCal troops/groups must select a high-adventure vendor from the [High-Adventure Approved Vendor List](#), which consists of organizations that meet Girl Scouts safety and insurance requirements for the activity. For the safety of our members, before a troop uses a high-adventure site/vendor for a troop or service unit event, the council must approve the high-adventure site/vendor. This process is designed to ensure a safe experience and protect the council's and volunteer's legal interests.
 - **Adding high-adventure facilities to the Approved Vendor List:** If your preferred vendor is not listed on the High-Adventure Approved Vendor list, please follow the simple steps in the [Volunteer Essentials](#) for adding high-adventure vendors.
 - **Prepare for emergencies.** Ensure the presence of a waterproof first-aid kit and a first-aider with a current certificate in first aid (including adult and child CPR or CPR/AED), who is prepared to handle cases caused by extremes of temperature, such as heat exhaustion, heat stroke, frostbite, cold exposure, and hypothermia, as well as sprains, fractures, and altitude sickness. Ensure that emergency transportation is available, if any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first-aider with wilderness first-aid certification. See Volunteer Essentials for information about first-aid standards and training. The designated adult should have a working cell phone for emergencies. [[SAFETYWISE: First Aid & First Aiders](#)]

Safety Activity Checkpoint **Swimming**

HIGH-ADVENTURE ACTIVITY: Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form Required

Council Approval: Required

Activity Permitted For: D B J C S A



About Swimming

Swimming is a Girl Scout tradition that builds fitness, leadership, and team-building skills. Your troop can swim in pools, water parks, or natural bodies of water like oceans, rivers, or lakes. Safety is one of the keys to having fun in the water. Some Girl Scout camps have places to swim; backyard, hotel, cruise ship, and water park pools are possibilities, too. You can also visit national and regional parks that allow swimming.

Consult a local parks and recreation department, YMCA, or American Red Cross for swimming lessons.

Learn More:

Learn swimming strokes. What is the difference between butterfly and breaststroke? How do you do a flip turn? Get some ideas at [Enjoy Swimming](#)

Create swimming games. Marco Polo and Find the Penny are popular swimming games, but you can make up your own, too. Get more ideas at [Pool Games](#).

Also see:

- [Fun swimming games](#)
- [Swimming World](#) magazine
- Safety around water: [YMCA](#)
- [American Red Cross lifeguard training](#)
- [USA Swimming](#)

Include Girls with Disabilities and/or Special Needs

Talk to girls with disabilities and/or special needs their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Contact the pool operator in advance. Ask about accommodating people with disabilities and/or special needs.

Additional Resources:

See [Move United Sports](#) to learn more about equipment, adaptations, and finding a program near you. Check out [World Para Swimming](#) to learn about inspiring swimmers of all abilities.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Emergency Action Plan (EAP). Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

Identify lifeguard(s). When using a staffed public facility, lifeguards will be provided. At beaches or waterfronts, make sure a lifeguard will be on duty. For swimming on your own, you will need to recruit a lifeguard. At least one lifeguard, certified in American Red Cross Lifeguard Training or equivalent, and one watcher are present at all times. When using more than one lifeguard, lifeguards under 18 years of age may be included in the total, as long as there is 1 adult lifeguard also present. Utilize Yelp, your local YMCA or Community Pool to find a Lifeguard for your activities. See the table below for the type of lifeguard needed.

Exception for lakes, rivers, streams: At least one lifeguard, certified in American Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard course or the equivalent, is present for every 25 swimmers, plus one watcher for every 10 swimmers.

Exception for pools: For swimming activities in public pools, hotel and cruise-ship pools, and backyard pools, the lifeguards are at least 16 years old and have American Red Cross Lifeguard Training certification or the equivalent. When girls are wading in water more than knee-deep, an adult with American Red Cross or equivalent lifeguard certification must be present.

Identify watchers. One dedicated adult watcher is needed for every 10 swimmers. This person assists the group by watching for possible emergencies. Lifeguards and watchers are stationed at separate posts. They stay out of the water, except in emergencies. American Red Cross (ARC) Basic Water Rescue, YMCA Aquatics Safety Assistant, or similar training is the preferred preparation. Alternately, the lifeguard may be able to give watchers an orientation.

Swimming Lifeguards and Watchers Ratios

Number of Swimmers	Lifeguards	Watchers
1–10	1 adult (see exception for pools above)	1*
11–25	1 adult (see exception for pools above)	2–3*
26–35	2 persons, at least 1 is an adult; others may be 16 years of age or older.	3–4*
36–50	2 persons, at least 1 is an adult; others may be 16 years of age or older.	4–5*

*Some states allow watchers to be under the age of 18, but in all states, they must be at least 16 years of age.

These numbers are a minimum. The ratio of lifeguards and watchers to swimmers may need to be increased depending on the number of girls in one area, swimming level and ability, girls with disabilities and/or special needs, age level and ability to follow instructions, type of swimming activity (instruction, recreation), type of swimming area, weather and water conditions, and rescue equipment available. If you are unsure whether your swimming lifeguards and watchers ratios are sufficient, contact GSNorCal's Risk Management Team (insurance@gsnorcal.org).

Clearly identify swimming abilities. These could be indicated, for example, with different colored wristbands to signify beginners, intermediate, and advanced swimmers. Parents/Guardians should be consulted prior to swimming event to verify girls' abilities. The pool operator or lifeguard may have the final word in determining a girl's abilities based on the skills needed. Some examples:

- In pools, the lifeguard can ask each participant to enter the water slowly, stay close to the edge of the pool, swim from one end to the other, and then float for 30 seconds.
- In lakes, the lifeguard can ask each participant to jump into the water, swim for 50 yards, then float or tread water for one minute.
- In surf, the swimming test should be held in advance. The lifeguard asks each participant to jump into water over her head, swim 100 yards using a combination of freestyle and elementary backstroke, and then tread water for two minutes.

Ensure swimming site safety:

- A posting indicates water quality passes local health department tests and sanitation standards.
- Shallow areas are marked “No Diving.”
- Diving areas are separate from other swim areas.
- Chlorine levels are tested and maintained. Water should be clear.
- The area around the pool is free of clutter.
- No electrical appliances are anywhere near the pool.
- The swimming area should be free from dangerous marine life and clearly marked.
- No sharp, rocky, or heavily shelled beach waters should be chosen, if possible.
- At water parks, do not dive or run. Most waterpark injuries are from slips and falls.
- Participants should know their physical limits. Observe a water ride before going on. Use extra care on water slides.
- Monitor time in the water. How long should participants swim? Swimmers’ ability, weather conditions, and water temperature should be considered. Often, 30-minute time periods are plenty.
- Swim only during daylight or in well-lit pools.
- Diving is prohibited in waters of unknown depth or conditions. For all diving, the required water depth extends 10 feet on each side of the board or jumping point. If tides, drought, or other forces affect the water depth, it is checked each time before diving is permitted. Girls do not dive off the side of the board.

Safety Gear

Ask the pool operator or lifeguard what is available:

- Reaching pole
- Rescue tube
- Backboard
- Ring buoy
- Throw bag with line (typically 30 feet)

For open water:

- Paddle board
- Rescue can
- Kayak
- Other available rescue gear

Additional Gear.

- Goggles
- Swim cap
- Nose and ear plugs for girls who need them



Girl Scouts of Northern California's Approval Process for Swimming

Swimming is considered a high-adventure activity and must be pre-approved by the council.

- **Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form:** Submit the online [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) to council at least 4-6 weeks prior to your activity. Gather the following information to complete this form:
 - ☐ Confirmation that your chaperones are registered members of Girl Scouts of Northern California and have a current background check. Troop Leaders can find this information in their [Volunteer Toolkit](#).
 - ☐ Name of First Aider and a copy of their current CPR/First Aid certification card. Certification needs to be renewed every two years. If you are hiking or backpacking farther than 30 minutes from a medical facility, please have the information of the member, who is certified in Wilderness First Aid, accompanying your troop. See [Volunteer Essentials](#) for information about first-aid standards and training
 - ☐ Confirm that the necessary online and in-person courses have been completed for this trip. You can find more information or register for these courses in your [Volunteer Learning Portal](#) in the section called Trip & Outdoor Advisor.
 - For example, the **Camp Out course** is required for all camping trips that involve advanced outdoor cooking or camping trip with girls to a campground or other non-GSNorCal outdoor facility for longer than 1 night without indoor plumbing and electricity. Girls should have already had practice sleeping and cooking outdoors.
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Start Your GS Year Off Right!

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to enable volunteers to celebrate their successes, identify areas to work on, and brainstorm solutions to issues they may be facing as they head into a new year of Girl Scouts.

Time Needed

15-20 minutes

Supplies

- Handouts

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Introduction

This is an opportunity for leaders to identify areas where things are going well, where there are improvements to be made, and where they need more support heading into the upcoming year.

Activity

Split into smaller groups for a "rose, bud, thorn" discussion. Ensure the groups consist of a mix of leader experience and levels. Based on their experiences during the previous GS year, ask them to share a "rose" (a highlight or success story), a "bud" (something that worked but could use some tweaking or improvement) and a "thorn" (an area that is causing concern or isn't working well).

Each group should brainstorm solutions and pick one bud, rose, and thorn to share with the larger group (including their solutions). If there are thorns for which the group cannot determine a solution, bring these issues to the larger group. If they remain unsolved, connect the leaders to other volunteers or council staff for help.

In conclusion, encourage them to start their new year by firmly tackling any residual thorns, planning to further develop the 'buds' and celebrate and revisit the roses.

Leaders can also begin their year by carrying out the same activity with their troop, to remind them of all the things that went well, and where they can work together to achieve success.

Extension

Use the attached handout to discuss setting the tone for this year's meetings - being inclusive and welcoming, having fun, and keeping it youth-led.

Discover: Volunteers discover that many issues are universal and other leaders may have already developed solutions.

Connect: Volunteers connect to share ideas.

Take Action: potential solutions are provided and volunteers feel supported.

Make Her Experience Memorable

Want to play a meaningful role in her Girl Scout experience, but not sure where to start? Consider this the ultimate cheat sheet for all-star Girl Scout parents—no matter how busy you may be! And remember when you help with her troop, you're not only doing her troop leader a favor but also modeling leadership for your girl. She'll be prouder than ever to call you hers.



If You Have 15 Minutes a Week, offer to...

Organize and manage the calendar for troop snacks or carpools. There's no need to provide goodies or buckle up the girls every week yourself! Simply helping other parents sign up and commit to future meeting dates will make meetings go smoothly for everyone.



If You Have 30 Minutes a Week, offer to...

Manage troop communications for the troop leader. This can mean anything from sending texts to parents to confirm meeting dates or to update them with changes to the schedule, maintaining the troop's social presence, or organizing an old-fashioned phone tree in case of an emergency.



If You Have 45 Minutes a Week, offer to...

Take photos or videos at meetings and Girl Scout events. Leaders are often too busy to document every exciting moment, so your help will likely be well-received. Just be sure all girls have signed photo releases and they're on file with your council before snapping and sharing images.



If You Have 1–2 Hours a Week, offer to...

Lead part of a troop meeting or guide girls through earning a specific badge. You can introduce them to a topic that you have special expertise in or explore a new activity and learn alongside the troop!



If You Have 2–3 Hours a Week, offer to...

Take on the role of cookie volunteer for your girl's troop. You'll be playing a key part in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, which raises funds for troop activities and teaches girls financial skills, how to be confident when speaking publicly, and how to make decisions and collaborate as a group.

No matter how you contribute to your girl's troop, seeing you play an active role in her experience will give her a sense of pride—don't be surprised if when her Girl Scout friends start to admire and appreciate you, she sees you in a whole different light! Plus, getting involved gives you something special that you're part of *together*, which in our busy lives, is worth its weight in gold.

Learning Objective

Introducing a new Girl Scout tradition to troop volunteers who may have no experience or prior knowledge.

Time Needed

20 minutes

Supplies

- Safety pins
- Small card tags
- Craft supplies - a random assortment is fine, and volunteers can be asked to bring items to re-use.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- Link the activity back to the purpose - traditions unite us all in the sisterhood of Girl Scouts!

Introduction

Explain what SWAPS stands for (Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere) and the history of this Girl Scout tradition.

- SWAPS began as a type of "Girl Scout business card" and were a way for Girl Scouts to keep in contact after an event.
- SWAPS date from the 1950's and made their first appearance at national events for Girl Scout Seniors.
- SWAPS always have a pin and a small tag with the giver's troop number and the event at which they were swapped.
- The SWAP may be representative of the troop, the individual Girl Scout, or the event in some way.

Activity: Make and Exchange SWAPS!

Provide printed and/or real-life examples of completed SWAPS for inspiration!

Divide volunteers into groups with a range of experience so that those who have used SWAPS with their troops can give ideas.

Allow time for everyone to complete at least one SWAP, and additional time for swapping.

Debrief:

Don't forget the tips of swapping: try not to spend much money, be creative and make hand-crafted SWAPS, avoid using food products, try to ensure a SWAP for everyone present, swap face-to-face, never say anything negative about someone else's SWAP, and never refuse a SWAP!

Discover: Volunteers understand the importance of traditions to connect Girl Scouts around the nation.

Connect: Volunteers connect with each other and with their youth to continue the tradition.

Take Action: Consider pairing this activity with a troop 'recycle/exchange' night where unwanted supplies can be used to create new SWAPS.

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to enable volunteers to share problems or issues they've encountered with their troops and problem solve as a group.

Time Needed

15-20 minutes

Supplies

- Stopwatch
- Paper
- Pens/pencils
- Moderator
- Basket or container for each group

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Activity

Announce that participants will have the chance to throw all their troubles away! If you have a large community, divide them into smaller groups of 8-9.

Have each person write their problems or concerns on a piece of paper, then crumple them up and throw them in the basket.

After all the problems have been thrown away, instruct participants to divide into teams of 2 or 3 within the group. Have one person from each team take one of the problems out of the group's basket. Give everyone one minute to brainstorm with their team and come up with possible solutions to the problems they received.

Each team will then take it in turns to read the problem and share their solutions with the larger group. Depending on the number of teams in each group, you may wish to impose a time limit on discussion for each problem.

Coming Together

Wrap up the session by bringing the group together and restating some of the problems that have been solved during the session. Assign appropriate volunteers to research any problems that need further follow-up, and set aside time at a future meeting to address any problems that weren't solved.

Try using this technique at any time of the year, especially when troops have settled in and problems may be surfacing.

Extension

This activity can be re-purposed for other group discussions, such as community projects, service unit events, volunteer support needs etc.

Discover: Volunteers spend time identifying issues that may impact the health of their troops.

Connect: Volunteers connect to problem solve and support each other.

Take Action: potential solutions are provided and volunteers feel heard.

Learning Objective This activity is designed to train volunteers on appropriate and inappropriate ways to earn and spend troop money.

Time Needed

20-30 minutes

Supplies

- 3 differently colored containers (green, orange, and red if possible)
- Printed and cut strips and printed year plans.
- Optional: plastic eggs

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Activity

Preparation: print the slips with the white background and cut them up in advance. If you wish, you could place each slip in a plastic egg so that participants open the egg to remove the slip.

Provide each table group with a printed copy of the troop's year plan for their reference, so they can see what activities were voted and agreed upon in advance.

Each participant takes it in turns to come forward and take a slip. They read it out loud and then decide which container it should go into: green (appropriate income or expenditure), orange (appropriate only with further discussion/voting by the troop) or red (inappropriate). As a group, discuss whether the choice was correct. Refer to answer key for further information on troop financial management.

Coming Together

Invite group to share activities or projects that may not have been covered during the activity and which may still be unclear. The group can discuss based on what they have learned so far whether or not these would be appropriate.

Discover: Volunteers learn via specific examples what is and is not appropriate troop financial management.

Connect: Volunteers connect to brainstorm and problem solve.

Take Action: potential causes of conflict amongst troop parents and volunteers can be avoided.



Troop Financial Management: Year Plan



Troop Year Plan

For the purposes of this activity, assume the following:

3rd grade Brownie troop

15 active Girl Scouts

Meetings twice per month, plus occasional additional activities voted on by the troop

Badges

The troop has voted to earn the following badges:

Cabin Camper

Fair Play

Snacks

Potter

Cookie Decision Maker

Coding Basics

Activities

The troop has voted for the following additional activities:

One-night camping trip

Pumpkin Patch

Overnight at the zoo

Community service: school backpacks for foster kids

Theater trip to see The Lion King

End of year Court of Awards and pool party at a troop member's house

Money Earning

Costs for the troop's plans are estimated to exceed their income from council money earning opportunities, so the troop will need to do some additional money earning.



Troop Financial Management

One night cabin rental - \$80	Fall Take Action Program income - \$320
Food for camping trip - \$120	Cookie program income - \$1200
Pottery studio fee - \$500	Proceeds from yard sale - \$150
Materials for cookie sale posters - \$40	Proceeds from Chipotle dine-in fundraiser - \$240
Coding expert to teach badge skills - \$75	Cash donations solicited by girls - \$200
Earned badges and shipping - \$340	Purchase of a camp stove for camping trip - \$50
Fun patches and shipping - \$150	Vest for one girl who has financial hardship - \$30
Pumpkin patch entrance fee - \$150	Fix flat tire on leader's car after camping trip - \$80
Corn dogs for everyone at pumpkin patch - \$80	Pizza for parents at parents' meeting - \$50
Zoo overnight tickets - \$750	Uniform for leader - \$40
Lion King tickets - \$1200	Troop dues, \$5 per girl per meeting - \$750
Backpacks and supplies for community service - \$350	Reimbursement for printing of permission forms - \$10
Lifeguard fee for pool party - \$100	Income from bake sale - \$250
Reimbursement of troop dues for girl who left troop - \$30	Proceeds from raffle (top prize = a case of cookies) - \$230
Snacks for troop meetings - \$150	Swim lessons for 2 girls so they can attend pool party - \$50
Flowers for Court of Awards - \$30	Lion King T-shirts - \$300
Reimbursement of gas for troop drivers - \$65	Mandatory payment to troop from parent whose Girl Scout did not participate in cookie sales - \$100



Troop Financial Management

One night cabin rental - \$80	Fall Take Action Program income - \$320
Food for camping trip - \$120	Cookie program income - \$1200
Pottery studio fee - \$500	Proceeds from yard sale - \$150 <i>Sure! But make sure you get approval from council first!</i>
Materials for cookie sale posters - \$40	Proceeds from Chipotle dine-in fundraiser - \$240 <i>Sure! But make sure you get approval from council first!</i>
Coding expert to teach badge skills - \$75	Cash donations solicited by girls - \$200 <i>Cash donations can only be solicited by adults, never youth</i>
Earned badges and shipping - \$340 <i>If the troop has voted to purchase badges</i>	Purchase of a camp stove for camping trip - \$50 <i>This is an approvable expense if the troop has voted for it</i>
Fun patches and shipping - \$150 <i>If the troop has voted to purchase patches</i>	Vest for one girl who has financial hardship - \$30 <i>The troop can vote to provide financial assistance for members</i>
Pumpkin patch entrance fee - \$150	Fix flat tire on leader's car after camping trip - \$80 <i>This is a personal expense, not a troop expense</i>
Corn dogs for everyone at pumpkin patch - \$80 <i>Make sure it's a troop decision, not an adult one!</i>	Pizza for parents at parents' meeting - \$50 <i>Troop money should not be spent to benefit parents</i>
Zoo overnight tickets - \$750	Uniform for leader - \$40 <i>Troop money should not be spent on adult uniforms</i>
Lion King tickets - \$1200	Troop dues, \$5 per girl per meeting - \$750
Backpacks and supplies for community service - \$350	Reimbursement for printing of permission forms - \$10
Lifeguard fee for pool party - \$100	Income from bake sale - \$250 <i>Sure! But make sure you get approval from council first!</i>
Reimbursement of troop dues for girl who left troop - \$30	Proceeds from raffle (top prize = a case of cookies) - \$230 <i>Games of chance are not approved money-earning activities</i>
Snacks for troop meetings - \$150 <i>Absolutely... if the troop decided this is what they wanted</i>	Swim lessons for 2 girls so they can attend pool party - \$50 <i>Troop money should benefit all girls equally</i>
Flowers for Court of Awards - \$30 <i>Only if this is what the troop chose</i>	Lion King T-shirts - \$300 <i>Make sure it's a troop decision, not an adult one!</i>
Reimbursement of gas for troop drivers - \$65	Mandatory payment to troop from parent whose Girl Scout did not participate in cookie sales - \$100 <i>Participation in product program is always optional</i>

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to introduce adult volunteers to different systems of troop government and how they might change as the Girl Scouts age and progress

Time Needed

30-40 minutes

Supplies

- "Talking Buddy" - this can be any object that can be safely passed around. A soft toy works well.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Introduction

Troop government is a structured way for Girl Scouts to manage their troop discussions and decisions. Using a democratic form of troop government is one way to implement the processes of youth-led, cooperative learning. In this session, adults will be introduced to the 5 main types of troop government: Daisy Circle, Brownie Ring, Patrol System, Executive Board, and Town Meeting.

Activities

In this session, adults will have the opportunity to try out types of government and discuss how and when they are best used.

- 1) Daisy Circle and Brownie Ring. Gather all the attendees into a circle and give them a discussion topic (e.g. ("where would you like to have an end of year celebration?") Tell them they have 30 seconds each to share their ideas. They should not talk unless they have the talking buddy, and should not interrupt or criticize someone else's suggestions but they may pass the talking buddy straight to the next person if they don't wish to speak. Give the talking buddy to the first person and have them pass it on when they are done talking. Stick to time limits, record their ideas and then, when everyone is done sharing, recap and give them a shortlist to vote from.
- 2) Patrol System. Divide the attendees into smaller groups (approx 4-5 per group). Ask them to choose a name for their patrol and pick a leader for this session. Ask each group to discuss a topic (it can be the same topic as you used previously, or a new topic) for 5 minutes and then bring the group together and have the patrol leaders share what their group discussed.
- 3) Town Meeting. Reconvene as a large group and ask one person to be the moderator. Again, pick a topic for discussion - if you haven't already, you'll probably want to change the topic and give them something new to discuss (e.g. determine a packing list for camp, or choose a community service project). Give a time limit and have the moderator call on people who wish to contribute to the discussion until the time is up.

Learning Objective

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Time Needed

30-40 minutes

Supplies

- "Talking Buddy" - this can be any object that can be safely passed around. A soft toy works well.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Activities Cont.

If time permits, you may also want to enact an Executive Board government system. Attendees can discuss positions and responsibilities (e.g. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) and hold a mock election. However, if you are running short of time this could be covered verbally. With an Executive Board, board members would gather input from other troop members (e.g. via a suggestion box) and meet separately to make decisions for the troop. Board positions would be rotated at a frequency determined by the troop.

Coming Together

Once everyone has experienced the different troop government systems, bring attendees back together for a final discussion.

Debrief prompts:

Which of the government methods would be best suited to a younger troop, and why?

Which method/s work better with a smaller group?

Which are best for a larger group?

Why is it important to have a troop decide on discussion rules first?

How might a troop change its government system as it ages and progresses?

How could troop leaders ensure that all voices are heard in each type of system?

Discover: Volunteers explore government systems and how they might implement them.

Connect: Volunteers connect to brainstorm.

Take Action: Volunteers learn how to put youth-led, cooperative leadership into practice.



Volunteer Appreciation and Recognition



Learning Objective

This activity is designed to educate volunteers on the importance of volunteer recognition, the ways in which appreciation can be shown, and the awards and recognitions process.

Time Needed

30 minutes

Supplies

- Handouts - National and Council Awards Packet

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be sure to send follow-up to the community via your communication channels. See page 2 for resources.

Introduction

Without adult volunteers, there would be no Girl Scouts! Our volunteers give their time, energy, enthusiasm, and skills to help Girl Scouts grow. Appreciation for these efforts can take many forms; from a simple thank you note to a formal award, recognition shows that their hard work is appreciated.

Activity 1

Split into smaller groups and brainstorm ways in which we can:

- Recognize the adult volunteers in our troops who go above and beyond.
- Recognize ourselves! What funny or serious volunteer awards could the service unit offer? In what ways could the service unit show appreciation and reward consistent meeting attendance?

Have each group report out. Inform attendees of volunteer appreciation resources available such as ecards, scrapbook templates, craft printables.

Activity 2

Provide copies of the National & Council Awards packet. Briefly review the awards available and the nomination timeline. If the service unit offers its own awards, describe these, and the process for submitting nominations. Note that both National and Council awards are presented at the same recognition ceremony in October. See presenter's notes.

Activity 3

Pair up participants and ask them to find out more about each other's Girl Scout volunteerism. Ask questions such as their positions held, length of service, the impact of their work, and what they are most proud of. Use the information you have discovered to decide which award would be most appropriate for your partner. Which of their accomplishments would you highlight in your nomination?

Discover: Volunteers discover the National and Council awards and the process for nominating a volunteer.

Connect: Volunteers connect to share ideas.

Take Action: Volunteers are motivated to implement appreciation ideas within their troops, and for service unit volunteers.

Presenter's Notes

- National and Council awards are created by GSUSA and GSNorCal respectively, but are all reviewed and awarded at the council level.
- There are modules available in gsLearn for anyone who wants or needs more information about the nomination process and awards available.
- The first step when nominating for an award is to decide on the correct award.
- The second step is to check the past awardees list at https://www.gsnorcal.org/content/dam/gsnorcal-redesign/documents/volunteer_resources/adult-recognition/adult-recognition-recipients-list.xlsx
- Complete and submit the nomination. Provide as much detail as you can!
- The endorser should submit an endorsement form with the required number of signatures.
- Submissions are reviewed by a committee and either approved or denied. In some cases, the committee may recommend a different award.
- There are 5 national awards created by GSUSA and 10 awards created by GSNorCal.
- Awardees are invited to a recognition event in the fall. Everyone is welcome to attend and support the awardees.

Follow Up: Links and Resources to Share

- Help Center article on National and Council awards: <https://helpcenter.gsnorcal.org/hc/en-us/articles/11444649496731-Resources-Adult-Recognition>
- Help Center article on volunteer appreciation including ecard generator and appreciation ideas: <https://helpcenter.gsnorcal.org/hc/en-us/articles/11444667372443-Resources-Volunteer-Appreciation>
- Award criteria: https://www.gsnorcal.org/content/dam/gsnorcal-redesign/documents/volunteer_resources/adult-recognition/national-council-award-criteria.pdf
- Service unit awards: https://www.gsnorcal.org/content/dam/gsnorcal-redesign/documents/volunteer_resources/adult-recognition/service-unit-adult-recognitions-packet.pdf

Learning Objective

This activity is designed to show troop volunteers how to enable their troop to take charge of their own Girl Scout Leadership Experience in a safe and age-appropriate way.

Time Needed

15-20 minutes

Supplies

- Printed copies of attached handouts
- Plain paper and a pen for each attendee

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time frame.
- If you don't have the answers, be honest and guide them to appropriate staff or volunteers.
- Be careful about allowing negativity to creep in - keep a positive mindset!

Introduction

One of the key aspects of Girl Scouting is that it is youth-led. Girl Scouts take ownership of their experience, decide what they will accomplish, and are given opportunities to lead. What is the adult volunteer's role in encouraging age-appropriate youth leadership?

Self-Reflection

First, ask the attendees to spend a couple of minutes in self-reflection. How youth-led is their troop? In what areas are they doing well, and where could they use some help?

Activity

Read the following lines one by one. For each line, ask the attendees to imagine that it was said by a youth member of their troop, and to write down a response that they may give.

"Ugh, this is soooo boring!"

"I don't really care what we do - whatever Julia wants, I guess."

"I think we should take a year off school and cruise around the world!"

"Can we go camping this year?"

"I want to earn the Robotics badge but nobody else does."

"I don't want to sell cookies."

"I wish we did more outdoor stuff."

"Why are we earning this badge?"

"I want to earn my Bronze Award."

"I've never seen the snow!"

Now pass out copies of the '12 signs...' handout and ask attendees to evaluate their responses. NB: if participants wish to work in groups they can, but many may prefer to keep their responses private.

Finish with a group discussion on common ways in which troops may not be as youth-led as we would like, and how to pro-actively solve for these problems. Pass out remaining handouts and invite questions and conversation.

Discover: Volunteers spend time identifying issues that may impact the health of their troops.

Connect: Volunteers connect to problem solve and support each other.

Take Action: potential solutions are provided and volunteers feel heard.

12 signs you're encouraging youth-led opportunities

1. You know that everyone's opinion counts and you actively encourage them to speak up and share their ideas.
2. You show respect for what they say and value their opinions regardless of their age. You recognize that even Daisy Girl Scouts can begin to develop their leadership skills by sharing, voting and choosing.
3. You actively encourage youth to follow the Girl Scout Law, which includes the statement "be a sister to every Girl Scout." You remind them how much they learn from each other.
4. The youth members suggest how they want to spend their time in Girl Scouting and where they want to take trips and your response is something along the lines of "How can we make that happen?" or "How can I help?"
5. They are not afraid to disagree with your suggestions, but are also open to your ideas.
6. Your first reaction to an outrageous suggestion, such as a year off from school to cruise around the world, is not "That's impossible!" but rather "Why are you interested in doing that?" as an attempt to figure out what is behind the statement. Probing the suggestion could lead to another idea that might be a bit more realistic.
7. If you're not comfortable with an activity suggested by the troop - maybe you'd rather not go snow-tubing - you help them find an adult who can make their ideas a reality - as long as those ideas are okay, according to Safety Activity Checkpoints.
8. You help them evaluate the value of their experiences: What did you learn? What was the best part of the day? How did this experience affect you? What might you do differently next time?
9. You share your ideas with your troop, but you don't expect or need them to jump up and down with excitement each time they hear one of them.
10. They are clearly comfortable saying what they like and don't like about your ideas when you offer them as possibilities rather than as "must-do's."
11. They know they can come to you for help whenever they decide they need it.
12. You are always ready to offer support and encouragement.



Progression Within the Girl Scout Processes

Youth-Led Examples

Program Level	Youth Processes	In Action	Adult Facilitation	Adult Facilitation in Action
Daisy (K-1)	Freely express their feelings, opinions and choices or report that they could even if they don't act on it.	Choose a song for the group to sing.	Identify some activities and/or decisions that girls can take the lead on for each session.	Make a list of activity choices for the next meeting and have girls vote by a show of hands.
Brownie (2-3)	Express what activities they want to do, how they would like to do them and act on them.	Decide on a skill they would like to learn and come up with some ideas on how, why, and where they can learn it.	Provide options for troop to choose from only if they cannot think of options themselves.	Assist in designing a project or a procedure for caring for materials, cleaning up, etc.
Junior (4-5)	Strategize about how to carry out an activity or project, determining what their project goal is and what resources they need.	Devise their own questions, pose own problems, and think about how to answer/solve them.	Model and provide strategies for solving problems and making decisions.	Pose open-ended and "W" questions (e.g. Why did you choose this strategy over that one?)
Cadette (6-8)	Initiate discussion & activities, & take responsibility for organizing and implementing them with little adult input.	Give reports on their activities giving clear reasons for what they did/plan to do and their thought process.	Observe girl planning and give input when asked.	Use statements like: "I trust your opinion..." or "You're good at X...I think you will do well with that."
Senior (9-10)	Articulate the reasons behind their decisions and reflect on their implications.	Make connections (e.g. write letters or make calls) with service based organizations.	Encourage youth to volunteer for activities and responsibilities without being asked.	Encourage youth to participate in projects related to community outreach and service.
Ambassador (11-12)	Youth participate in activities that challenge their assumptions in positive ways.	Travel and speak on behalf of their troop of Girl Scouts.	Model self-control, independence, a sense of humor, and positive confident attitude.	Pose questions and ask them to think critically about issues.

Progression in Action

Examples of Different Levels of Youth and Adult Control

	Mostly Adult Controlled					Mostly Youth Controlled				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Introduce “Who chooses the initial activity?”	Adults choose the initial activity.	Adults choose an activity based on troop's interests.	Adults give options; youth choose an activity from those options.	Youth and adults generate ideas; troop chooses which activity to pursue.	Youth generate ideas based on their interests then choose the activity.					
Plan, Part 1 “Who generates ideas and chooses what girls will do with this activity?”	Adults generate and choose the idea.	Adults make a list of ideas; troops pick which one(s).	Youth brainstorm ideas. Adults eliminate any unworkable ideas; they choose from this list.	Youth brainstorm ideas. Adults guide in evaluating ideas to see if they're “do-able”. Troop chooses.	Youth brainstorm questions, evaluate them for “do-ability” and choose. Adults support as needed.					
Plan, Part 2 “Who plans the activity?”	Adults make the plan (what, when, where, etc.)	Adults do most of the planning. Adults give choices from certain options.	Adults provide the framework for planning how to vote, what decisions need to be made, delegation. Youth plan using this framework.	Adults give options for how to plan; different ways to vote, delegate, etc. Youth choose from these options, then plan.	Troop decides how they want to plan (delegation, decision making methods, etc.). Adults help to identify decisions that need to be made and troop makes them.					
Do “When girls are carrying out the activity, who identifies issues and creates solutions?”	Adults identify issues as they arise and explain how to solve them.	Adults identify issues as they arise, and give options for how to solve them. Youth choose from these options.	Adults identify issues as they arise, and ask open-ended questions to help find solutions.	Adults ask open-ended questions to help troop identify issues and find solutions.	Youth identify issues as they arise, problem-solve, and carry out solutions. Both youth and adults use open-ended questions to work through issues.					
Reflect “Who identifies what girls did and learned?”	Adults tell troop what they did and learned.	Adults tell troop what they did and learned; youth add additional thoughts.	Adults plan and lead a reflection; youth share what they did and learned. (Adults share their thoughts in the reflection as well.)	Adults identify ways to reflect (drawing, verbal, skits, ceremonies). Youth choose. Adults help them reflect & are included in the reflection.	Adults ask how the troop wants to reflect. Youth identify ways to reflect, choose one, and carry it out. (Adults are included in the reflection as well.)					