



# Service Unit Recruitment Guide

# Recruitment Strategies

## Adult-Facing

### School-Based Recruitment

Getting our message out to youth and their families within schools can be a very effective way to help a Girl Scout community to grow. Special attention should be given to building positive relationships with school administrators and parent/teacher organizations. Recruitment at or through the school can take many forms, depending on the school or district's policies.

Some opportunities may include:

- Principal Visit
- Classroom Visit
- Open House/Back to School night
- PTA/PTO Presentation
- Hosting information tables at school events

### Parent Information Session

A parent information session (often called Parent Information Night or PIN) is typically just for adults, though you should have some easy self-guided activities available for youth as some may bring children along. This is an opportunity to share the philosophy of Girl Scouts with parents/caregivers and organize them into new troops.

### Community-Based Recruitment

This recruitment strategy is designed to spread the word about Girl Scouts and increase Girl Scouts' presence and recognition within the community. The service unit should work with community organizations and Girl Scout staff to find opportunities for Girl Scouts to be present at community events throughout the year.

Options may include:

- Tabling at a community event
- Offering games or simple Girl Scout program at community events

## Youth-Facing

### Program-Based Recruitment

A program-based recruitment event is a scheduled event which engages potential new Girl Scouts by including them in programming. Though they are designed to be youth-facing, these events should also include a presentation to parents/caregivers to sell the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

### Welcome Troop

A Welcome Troop is a troop that is led by Girl Scout volunteers for the first 6 meetings. During the provided program, the volunteers will identify and train adults to take over the troop leadership, resulting in a fully functional and independent Girl Scout troop at the end of the 6 sessions.

Whichever recruitment strategy you choose, always ensure that families are clear on their next steps, whether that is joining an existing troop, attending another meeting, or forming a new troop.

# Recruitment FAQs

## What's the Purpose of a Recruitment Event?

To inspire new members, parents, volunteers, caregivers, and girls to get involved with Girl Scouting.

## What is My Role?

Local recruitment volunteers have a crucial role in increasing Girl Scouts' visibility in the community, promoting the benefits of Girl Scouting, and spreading the word about recruitment opportunities. You may be asked to:

- Use communication channels available to you to share flyers and information.
- Make arrangements for room rental.
- Coordinate other adult and girl volunteers.
- Attend the event to support, or run the event if you are comfortable doing so.
- Identify tabling opportunities at your school/in the local area.
- Talk to parents and help them form new troops.

## What Makes a Successful Tabling Event?

Have a professional, well organized and eye-catching display that entices people to come and ask questions.

Be prepared to be pro-active, and bring your energy - don't wait for people to come to you! You can hand out postcards and engage people while they wait in line.

At events where children will be present, providing a small activity for them to do at your table is a great way to bring them to the table and give you time to talk with parents.

## Who Do I Connect With for Support?

Your service unit's Membership Advisor, Recruitment Specialist, and/or your council staff member.

## What is the Troop Catalog?

This is the catalog of troops with open spaces for new girls and adult volunteers. Ask your staff member for an up-to-date print out of troops with openings prior to your recruitment event. Prospective members can access the catalog at [www.gsnorcal.org/join](http://www.gsnorcal.org/join)

## What Recruitment Resources Are Available?

- Business cards for recruiters
- One-pagers
- Postcards
- Flyers
- Yard signs
- Giveaways - items vary but often include stickers, pencils, bracelets, bookmarks

## How Do I Prepare for a Tabling Event?

- Check in with your SU recruitment specialist or staff member and let them know about your event.
- Bring recruitment resources to pass out to potential members. This could include informational postcards and/or flyers inviting them to an upcoming event.
- Bring display items: anything you have available! Could include:
  - Uniforms
  - Sample books, handbooks, year plans
  - Trifold display of photos and information
  - A smile!
- Don't forget sign-in sheets, or printed QR codes, and pens.



# Parent Information Nights (PINs)

## The Purpose of PINs

A PIN is an opportunity for parents to find out more about the Girl Scout program, ask any questions they have, and, ultimately, start or join a troop. Check with your SU recruitment volunteer and/or your staff member - they will be able to support a PIN at your school or community venue, but if you are comfortable doing so, you may lead a PIN yourself.

### Checklist

- Select a date, location, and time - partner with your Recruitment Specialist or staff member for support if needed.
- Reserve an appropriate location with a restroom, e.g. school MPR, community room, place of worship, at least 1 month in advance. NB: if a contract is required, this must be signed by GSNorCal staff.
- Advertise the event through any channels available to you. Your staff member will be able to help with a flyer if needed.
- Arrange for volunteers (including older Girl Scouts) to run activities for girls if included in your plan.
- Arrive at least 30-45 minutes early to ensure you have room access, and tables/chairs are set up. Set up your materials, sign-in station, and girl activity if using.
- Check technology and wifi.
- Have parents sit according to their girl's grade level with sign-in sheets at each table so that adults can coordinate together and share contact info.
- Have level-based resources available at each table for parents to preview.
- Ensure that any youth-focused activities are situated away from the parent meeting area, to enable adults to have a conversation without too much noise disturbance.

## With Girl Scouts she'll gain:



# Talking Points

As potential members arrive, be sure to welcome them, direct them to sign in, and provide some program materials for them to look at as they wait.

**Start with an introduction** - who are you, what is your experience with Girl Scouts.

**Upfront contract** - how long will the meeting take, what will you cover, what is the anticipated outcome, what is the planned follow-up?

**Remember - this is a conversation, not a lecture.** Ask your audience what their prior experience is, what they are hoping for their girls to gain from Girl Scouts, what are they anxious about.

**Provide some information about the Girl Scout program** - include program pillars, troop fundamentals, what girls do in troops, how parents are involved, approximate cost (most troops cover most or all of their costs through product program). Refer back to the prior conversation and be sure to note the program areas which will be of particular interest to them (e.g. getting outdoors, making friends, building leadership skills).

**Emphasize that we are a volunteer-run organization** and that parent involvement is key to their child's and the troop's long-term success. Outline adult roles and how everyone will work together to ensure that no single individual has too much to do.

**Include your own personal anecdotes** which highlight key parts of the program including leadership outcomes, fun activities that your girl/s have participated in, events that are traditionally provided in your service unit, and also adult volunteer benefits such as friendships, experiences, and personal growth.

**Pause for questions throughout**, and engage the audience. What are they most interested in for their girl, what skills/interests do they have which they would like to share with the troop.

**Outline what is needed in order to start a new troop** in terms of adult roles, time commitments, process (i.e. applying for troop number, registration, background check, online training, connecting with staff member and/or SU volunteer).

**Finish with next steps** - link back to your upfront contract and desired outcomes. If new troops are needed and you have attendees who would be able to form a troop together, small group discussion is ideal - allow them the space to connect and discuss volunteer roles. If girls need placement, refer to the troop catalog for available troop spaces. Parents can access from their phones and register immediately. Ideally, have a printed copy of the catalog spaces with you.

# The Girl Scout Impact

## Benefits for Youth

**54%** of alumnae attribute their success in life to their time in Girl Scouts

**95%** of parents say their daughters have made more friends through Girl Scouts

**86%** of youth members say they gained new outdoor experiences through Girl Scouts

**90%** of parents say that their daughter is more confident because of Girl Scouts

## Benefits for Adults

**94%** of volunteers have made new friends.

**88%** believe their life is better because they volunteer with Girl Scouts.

**2/3** of volunteers believe their experience has helped them professionally.

**95%** of Girl Scout volunteers are happy knowing they are making girls' lives better.

## The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

**Girl Scouting helps youth:**

*Discover Self* (develop confidence by building skills and learning new things);

*Connect with others* (learn how to work as a team, resolve conflicts, and treat others with respect);

*Take Action* (develop projects, based on their own interests and values, that make their community a better place).

**Girl Scouting is delivered in ways that engage youth:**

*Youth-Led* (from the youngest ages, Girl Scouts have the chance to make decisions and shape their own experiences);

*Learning By Doing* (Girl Scouts get to do hands-on experiential activities); and

*Cooperative Learning* (Girl Scouts team up on projects so that everyone learns).

# Common Questions

**Membership dues:** Membership is renewed annually and runs from October 1st to September 30th. Membership fees apply for both youth and adults, plus the cost of a background check for adult volunteers. Financial aid is available upon request. During the extended year membership period (April 1st to July 31st), new members join for the remainder of the current year and are automatically renewed for the next membership year.

**Product Program:** participation is not mandatory, but this is a financial literacy program which is the primary means of budgeting, goal setting, and self-funding troop experiences so we encourage troops and girls to participate.

**Troop logistics:** responses depend on your area and can include typical troop structures - numbers of girls, single or multi-level, frequency of meeting, availability of room rentals in your area.

**Scouts BSA:** refer to talking points provided. Emphasize that they are different programs with a different focus. Girl Scouts is youth-led which means the activities are more variable and different troops are able to have a different focus according to the members' needs, wishes, and interests.

**Can adult males volunteer?** Yes! We encourage all adults to get involved, and adult males are welcome to volunteer in any role. A male troop leader will need an unrelated female co-leader and there must always be at least one registered and screened female in attendance at all troop activities.

**Recruiting more members:** staff or local volunteers will support with flyers and existing interest lists if more members are needed to start a new troop. Connecting via their school communication outlets is ideal - e.g. Facebook groups, room parents, teachers, PTA newsletters, direct communication channels.

**Time commitment:** be honest, but emphasize that troops are able to decide for themselves how active they will be, and they can determine their own meeting and activity schedule according to their bandwidth. Support will be provided to co-ordinate a parent meeting with interested families where logistics and specific roles can be discussed and selected.

**Financial commitment:** Girl Scouts is designed to be low cost, and financial aid is available for memberships, uniforms, and council events and camp. Most troops fund their activities almost entirely through product program participation.

*Remember: you are not expected to know everything! If you are asked questions that you are unable to answer, offer to have someone reach out to them, or guide them to our customer care email/phone.*



## After the Recruitment

- ✓ Make sure attendees are clear on next steps before they leave: who will contact them and when, what their immediate action items are etc.
- ✓ Make a note on the sign-in sheet of any adults who expressed interest in troop leadership and/or partnering further to build a new troop.
- ✓ Clean up the meeting space and return tables and chairs to their original positions.
- ✓ Send a copy of the sign-in sheet to your SU recruitment volunteer or staff member within 24 of the event.

# Next Steps for New Members

## Registration

If members and volunteers complete the joining process, they will receive follow up emails for:

- Membership receipt confirmation
- Girl role confirmation
- Background check information if the adult registered and selected a role.
- A request for troop information if the member joined without selecting a troop.

If members or volunteers stop at any point in the process, they will receive automated emails.

If they join an existing troop, they should expect to receive an email from the troop leader within one week.

## New Troops

If a new troop is formed, one adult will need to complete the troop number request form. This person will be the designated contact for the new troop, and will be given the role of Troop Leader or Co-op Troop Admin. They will then receive follow up emails for:

- Completing their membership registration
- Completing their fingerprinting
- Once those are completed, they will receive an email with a link to the troop's catalog listing that they can share with other families.
- An invitation to a welcome session with a staff member, who will be available to support them as they get started.

## Available Support

New troops are directly supported by council staff throughout the process. Once the troop is set up and registration and screening have been completed for the primary contact person (leader or admin), a staff member will reach out to introduce themselves and invite the new troop leadership to meet with them. The staff member will be available to guide them through the process and answer questions that they have.

## Online Resources

All adults in volunteer roles will be able to access online training through gsLearn to prepare them for their role. Some training is mandatory; all adults must complete Mandated Reporter training as required by law. Troop Leaders/Admins must complete the New Leader Training Course, and adults in other roles will take training so they understand their role and responsibilities.

Many online resources are available to support new troops and caregivers, including the Volunteer Toolkit, which contains meeting plans for all official badges, and Volunteer Essentials, which is an online resource covering GSNorCal policies and procedures for every eventuality.

# The Sandler Sales Model

**Bonding and Rapport:** Don't get in the way of where you want your potential members to go by being too enthusiastic or passive.

**Up-Front Contract:** Always set clear expectations and define a clear future after the event. Then, jump into a short (30 seconds or less) explanation of Girl Scouts, and give permission for attendees to ask questions.

**Pain:** There is a gap between where your attendees are, and where they want to be. It's your job to figure out what your attendees want. Ask questions and highlight outcomes that you feel strongly about and that reflect their concerns. Focus on the benefits for adults, too.

**Budget:** People purchase things from people they can trust. Be truthful and sincere when asked about money and time commitments. Uncover if participants are willing and able to invest what is necessary. Time is historically the most crucial aspect of this step.

**Decision:** You must uncover who the actual decision maker is. Don't be afraid to accept "no" as an answer, but have attendees understand the significance of being involved in their daughter's Girl Scout experience.

**Fulfillment:** If possible, walk adults through the registration process and/or the troop number request form. If not, make sure that you follow up with them the next day to offer assistance with registering.

**Post-Sell:** After the event, reflect on your approach, and talking points. Debrief with those who assisted.

## Defining Pain

Pain is the gap between where someone is and where they want to be. Maybe their daughter is new to the area and doesn't have many friends, or is lacking confidence, or spends too much time using technology and doesn't get outdoors much...

How Can Girl Scouts Help?

Use personal anecdotes, the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, and program pillars to show how Girl Scouts can benefit their family.

# Have a Conversation!

While there are some important aspects of Girl Scouts that you will want to ensure your audience hears, remember that you should be listening just as much as you are speaking, if not more. In order to identify their pain points (i.e. their needs and wishes) you will need to ask questions. Begin by asking about their Girl Scout experience, if they have any, and what they are looking for from Girl Scouts for their child. Answers to these questions will tell you what they are excited about and will let you know what to focus on when you are talking about the program. You can incorporate a slideshow presentation into your PIN but ensure you leave enough time for these conversations.

### Restate and reinforce

Show that you were listening - remember what people's responses were to your open ended questions and come back to them. E.g. if a parent mentions that they have recently moved to the area and their child doesn't have many friends, you will want to get them excited about the prospect of making friends in Girl Scouts, using both general points ("Girl Scouts is such a great way to make friends!") and specific anecdotes ("A friend of mine was in Girl Scouts as a child and even now, 30 years later, she still keeps in touch with her troop and they arrange annual camping meet ups!"). If a parent is concerned that their child has too much screen time and doesn't spend enough time outdoors, remember to bring this up later when discussing the outdoors options ("There's a Girl Scout camp property local to this area which is a great place to take the troop for a first camping trip - they can really get away from their screens and connect with nature!")

### Next steps

Make sure that you are very clear when it comes to what will happen next, and the expected timeline. If someone has volunteered as a troop leader or troop admin, explain what their follow-up will be ("I'll be working with Sarah for a few days to get that troop number issued and get the troop open for registration - Sarah, look for an email from me tomorrow with all the information you'll need to submit that request and get started on your training. You'll hear back from my colleague within a couple of days with a link to register, and then you'll do your background check. Everyone else, please consider which of the troop committee positions you may be able to support with and let Sarah know within the next few days. As soon as the troop is set up and open for registration, I'll send that link out to you all. If all goes smoothly that should take approximately one week.")