

Online Safety

Adult supervision for girls also extends to online activity.

In order to make sure that girls are aware of how to safely use the Internet, you should discuss online safety issues with the girls and distribute copies of the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#) and make sure they understand it. The girls should also take a copy of the pledge home and go over it with their parents. Both the girl and her parent should sign the pledge.

Please consult:

- [“Computer/Internet Use” Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
- Digital Cookie Terms & Conditions for Girls, Digital Cookie Terms & Conditions for Parents/Guardians and Digital Cookie Terms & Conditions for Volunteers (available in product sales materials)
- Follow the Girl Scout Safety Guidelines [[SAFETY-WISE: Girl Scout Safety Guidelines](#)]
- Ensure that girls are supervised according to the Adult-to-Girl ratio at all times. [[SAFETY-WISE: Adult-to-Girl Supervision Ratios](#)]
- Consult the Safety Activity Checkpoints for every activity the girls participate in [[SAFETY-WISE: Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)]
- Use required forms as the safety tools they are intended to be.
- Follow additional guidelines found in the Volunteer Essentials. Remember, common sense always prevails.

Troop Websites or Social Media Pages

Troops whose girls meet age criteria (13 years or older) and have parental permission may set up a troop website or a Facebook group. It can be a fantastic way for girls to share information, market Girl Scout products, and talk about their Take Action projects. Girls under age 13 may not use social networks in Girl Scout activities.

Before you and the girls design a website, do remember that the web is an open forum for anyone, including potential predators. Girls must understand that the Internet is an open means of communication that anyone can access. As such, websites will often attract people other than their intended users. It is, therefore, important that any information that could jeopardize the safety and security of girls and adults not be disclosed on a website. The following measures will help to ensure girls' online safety:

- Girl Scouts should only use their first names
- A Girl Scout's last name, address, phone number, or e-mail address should never be posted. For Digital Cookie a girl may post her unique Digital Cookie URL on her Facebook page and may

email it to friends and family (for additional information, please refer to the [Safety Activity Checkpoint for Cookies/Council Product Programs, Computer and Internet Use Safety Activity Checkpoint and Computer Internet Safety Pledge for Girls](#))

- Ensure that websites do not show personal e-mail addresses of girls, but use a troop or adult's e-mail.
- Always have a parent's or guardian's permission when using pictures of girls on a website. This is especially important if the girl is under 13 years of age.
- Do not post addresses of group meeting places, dates and times of meetings, events or trips on a website. Instead, an adult who wishes to communicate upcoming events with families of Girl Scouts should send an e-mail to the families.
- Do not allow automatic posting of messages to a website. All postings to message boards, social media, and guest books should have adult oversight, and be screened prior to posting live.
- Make yours a static site that does not allow outsiders to post messages to the site, or make sure all postings (such as message boards or guest books) have adult oversight and are screened prior to posting live.
- Don't violate copyright law by using designs, text from magazines or books, poetry, music, lyrics, videos, graphics, or trademarked symbols without specific permission from the copyright or trademark holder (Generally, this permission is pretty tough to get!). Girl Scout trademarks (such as the trefoil shape, Girl Scout pins, badges, and patches) can be used only in accordance with guidelines for their use. (The Girl Scout trefoil, for example, may not be animated or used as wallpaper for a website).
- Consult resources:
 - www.GSNorCal.org/forms for [Guidelines for Creating Your Own Troop or Group Web Page](#)
 - www.GSNorCal.org/forms for the [Computer/Online Use Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)

In addition to great resources for girls, there is plenty of advice for adults on how to monitor your child's online use, family internet safety tips, how to tell which sites are safe and reliable for teens, safe texting, IMing, gaming, and more.

See additional guidelines specific to participating in the Product Sales Program [[PROGRAM: Online Marketing](#)]