



NEW LEADER GUIDE

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

SERVICE UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida consists of 20 service units. Think of service units as Girl Scout communities specific to a geographic region. Service units are made up of dedicated volunteers working to provide and support the Girl Scout experience in their immediate area. Service unit team members and troop representatives meet several times throughout the year to share ideas, receive training, and talk about important announcements.

YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE FOLLOWING SERVICE UNIT:

Service Unit Name: _____ Service Unit #: _____ Meeting Day: _____

Meeting Time: _____ Meeting Location: _____

SERVICE UNIT MANAGER	
The service unit manager guides the service unit by sharing information provided by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida and facilitating service unit meetings. The service unit manager ensures the service unit is functioning and supports new and existing volunteers. You will get to know your service unit manager (often called the SUM) at your leader meetings. They'll have the latest information about things happening in the council.	Name of service unit manager: _____ Contact info: _____
MAGS & MUNCHIES AND COOKIE PROGRAM COORDINATORS	
Mags & Munchies and Cookie Program Coordinators train, support, and encourage accurate registrations for the Mags & Munchies and Cookie Programs. You will want to double check that your girls and troop volunteers are registered as members to participate. Visit MY GS on the council website and log into your Member Profile before the Mags & Munchies and Cookie Programs!	Name of Mags & Munchies and Cookie Program coordinators: _____ _____ Contact info: _____ _____
RECRUITER	
Recruiters connect with adult volunteers and girls in Girl Scouts, while ensuring that all girls in the service unit have the opportunity to fully participate in Girl Scout programs and activities. If you are looking for more girls to join your troop, let your recruiter know!	Name of recruiter: _____ Contact info: _____
NEW LEADER COORDINATOR	
The new leader coordinator welcomes new leaders and connects them to resources and support, including: the service unit team, leader meetings, and training resources. You will want to contact your service unit's new leader coordinator to learn more about getting started as a leader. The new leader coordinator wants to make sure that you have the best Girl Scout experience!	Name of new leader coordinator: _____ Contact info: _____

Thank you SO MUCH for volunteering as a Girl Scout troop leader!

Girl Scouts gives girls everywhere the opportunity to empower themselves, stand up, and make a difference. By nurturing innovation and developing leadership skills, we prepare girls to overcome challenges and advocate for their ideas now and later. With an emphasis on self-discovery, character building, and community impact, Girl Scouts helps girls become a powerful force for good in the world.

No matter how you volunteer, you'll make a difference in girls' lives. This go-to guide will prepare you to effectively lead during your first year as a Girl Scout volunteer. Need help along the way? Let us know! We have tools, training resources, and people to help support you through each step. You're now a part of our team. We can't wait to see the impact you'll have this year!

We always love to hear from you—feel free to give us a call at 800-232-4475 or email us at customercare@gscgf.org.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Mary Anne Servian
CEO, Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.

The Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

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.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

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5 WAYS GIRL SCOUTS BUILDS GIRL LEADERS



Strong Sense of Self

Girls have confidence in themselves and their abilities, and form positive identities.



Positive Values

Girls act ethically, honestly, and responsibly, and show concern for others.



Challenge Seeking

Girls take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from mistakes.



Healthy Relationships

Girls develop and maintain healthy relationships by communicating their feelings directly and resolving conflicts constructively.



Community Problem Solving

Girls desire to contribute to the world in purposeful and meaningful ways, learn how to identify problems in the community, and create “action plans” to solve them.

Girl Scout activities are designed to be girl-led, cooperative, and hands-on processes that create high-quality experiences conducive to learning.



What Girls Do

DISCOVER

Girls *discover* their values, skills, and the world around them.

CONNECT

Girls *connect* with others in a multicultural environment.

TAKE ACTION

Girls *take action* to make a difference in their world.

Make New Friends

Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other's gold.
A circle is round, it has no end. That's how long I want to be your friend.
I have a hand, you have the other. Put them together, and we have each other.
I've made new friends, and kept the old. Both are more precious than silver or gold!



History

We're part of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (you'll commonly hear it referred to as GSUSA). GSUSA is over 2.5 million strong—1.7 million girls and 750,000 adults who believe girls can change the world.

It began over 100 years ago with one woman—Girl Scouts' founder Juliette Gordon "Daisy" Low, who believed in the power of every girl. In 1912, Juliette began the first Girl Scout troop to provide an environment to prepare girls to face their world with courage, confidence, and character. This first troop of 18 girls played basketball, hiked, camped, swam, and learned about the world around them. Today we continue the Girl Scout mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

We're the preeminent leadership development organization for girls. With programs for girls from coast to coast and across the globe, Girl Scouts offers every girl a chance to do something amazing.

In the Gulf Coast area, Girl Scouting has been a viable program for girls since the 1920s, when local communities began implementing their own Girl Scout programs. Manatee County was the first in the gulf coast area to receive a charter from Girl Scouts of the USA. A group of troops meeting in Manatee County was chartered in 1945 as Manatee Girl Scout Council. In 1948, Manatee Girl Scout Council extended its jurisdiction to include Sarasota County, resulting in the creation of Gulfside Girl Scout Council. In 1962, Caloosa Girl Scout Council, made up of Lee, Collier, and one-half of Hendry Counties, merged with Gulfside Council and incorporated independent troops in Charlotte County and the Territory of DeSoto County to form Gulfcoast Council. Girl Scouts of the USA chartered Gulfcoast Council to serve the needs of girls in six and one-half counties (Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, Charlotte, Lee, Collier and half of Hendry). Gulfcoast Council was made up of 6,000 square miles and served girls from the Skyway Bridge to the Everglades. In 2006, Gulfcoast Council was extended to include Hardee, Highlands, and Glades Counties, and the other half of Hendry County. The Council's name was changed to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. in 1993. Now the council is made up of 10,000 square miles and not only serves girls from the Skyway Bridge to the Everglades, but also to Lake Okeechobee.

Who was Juliette Gordon Low?



Juliette was born on October 31, 1860, which we celebrate yearly as Founder's Day. She was a compassionate, curious, and independent woman who was interested in nature, art, animals, and athletics. Throughout her childhood and young adulthood, she experienced several ear injuries. This contributed to an almost complete loss of hearing for the rest of her life. These experiences and interests played a strong role in the development of the ideals and values of Girl Scouts.

"Scouting rises within you and inspires you to put forth your best."

— Juliette Gordon Low



Members

Members are girls, adult volunteer members (like you!), and lifetime Girl Scouts who are joined together in the pursuit of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Troops

Troops are the most common way girls participate in Girl Scouts. Troops are led by volunteers (often parents/caregivers, friends, or family members). The average troop size is 12 girls, but we have troops of 20 and more! Troops encourage girls to work as a team and build lasting friendships.

Service Units

Our council is made up of 20 service units. Service units are comprised of volunteers and girl members in an immediate geographic area. These service units are led by experienced individuals who support leaders, troops, and individual members. You may hear from your service unit volunteers regarding events, trainings, cookies, and much more!

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida is one of 111 councils in the U.S. and serves more than 5,000 girls in sunny southwest Florida. Our work is supported by more than 2,000 volunteers—including YOU! We'll get to know one another over the coming year (and for years to come!) as you have questions, seek support, attend council events, and more.

Girl Scouts of the USA

Girl Scouts of the USA (commonly referred to as GSUSA) is the national organization to which Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida belongs. Founded by Juliette Gordon Low, GSUSA now serves 2.5 million girls and adults. GSUSA is comprised of 112 Girl Scout councils in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Member of WAGGGS

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) reaches 10 million girls and young women in 150 member organizations that include Girl Scouts of the USA. And all of those girls in all of those countries are working to make the world a better place—just like your girl! Their mission is “to inspire girls and young women to reach their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.” Girl Scouts of the USA is a member of WAGGGS.

LEADER/CO-LEADER POSITION DESCRIPTION

ROLE: Work in partnership with the girls to develop and provide well-rounded opportunities that are age-appropriate, engaging, and further the mission of Girl Scouting.	TERM OF APPOINTMENT: The troop leader/co-leader is appointed for a one-year term that is renewable upon satisfactory performance.	ACCOUNTABILITY: The troop leader/co-leader reports directly to the service unit manager or designee.	SUPPORT: The troop leader/co-leader receives support, guidance, and encouragement from the service unit manager, coach/new leader coordinator, service unit team, and council staff. She/he has access to relevant learning opportunities.
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RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ▶ Mentors and supports girls in the troop and meets with the troop on a regularly scheduled basis.
- ▶ Helps girls plan, carry out, and evaluate their troop program using the GSLE and Girl Scout curriculum.
- ▶ Supports and encourages girls to attain desired skills, experiences, goals, and awards.
- ▶ Adheres to the recommended minimum troop size (12 girls) and communicates with council about any changes to grade level or desired number of girls (beyond 12).
- ▶ Ensures girl and adult registration is completed by September 30 for returning troops and within three meetings for new troops/girls.
- ▶ Establishes open communication and provides information from GSUSA, GSGCF, and community partners to troop members and parents/caregivers in a timely manner on a regular, ongoing basis.
- ▶ Creates mutually beneficial partnerships with troop volunteers and families, keeping parents/caregivers informed of troop meetings, programs, and field trips.
- ▶ Recruits and manages troop volunteers to support the troop.
- ▶ Ensures that all activities meet safety standards as indicated in *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- ▶ Encourages participation in council product programs.
- ▶ Manages the troop funds responsibly and completes finance reports on time and in accordance with GSGCF policies and procedures.
- ▶ Encourages flexibility in the troop to meet the needs of the individual girls.
- ▶ Supports the council's outcome evaluation by encouraging girls and parents/caregivers to complete the annual Girl Scout Voices Count surveys.
- ▶ Ensures all actions are guided by the Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ▶ Girl focus: Empower girls to lead activities, learn by doing, and cooperate with others, while having fun.
- ▶ Personal integrity: Demonstrate dependability, honesty, and credibility.
- ▶ Adaptability: Adjust and modify own behavior, and remain flexible and tolerant in response to changing situations and environments.
- ▶ Oral communication: Express ideas and facts clearly and accurately. Communicate with respect to resolve conflicts.
- ▶ Foster diversity: Understand, respect, and embrace differences. Be accepting of all girls that join, or request to join the troop.
- ▶ Technology skills: Access email and the internet regularly. Position requires use of a variety of technology platforms.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- ▶ Must become a registered member of GSUSA and be at least 18 years of age. Must be 21 years of age to transport girls. Must pass criminal background screening.
- ▶ Complete onboarding, training, and seek additional learning opportunities as needed.
- ▶ Ensure troop is represented at service unit meetings.



TROOP LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Your troop has a leadership team. Every troop has at least two adults, and some have more. Leaders and co-leaders receive the same training and have access to the same resources. How you divide roles and responsibilities in your troop is up to you, but if you don't discuss it, there can be stress or discourse.

New troop volunteers need to take time to talk with each other to determine who will take on the main tasks and ensure that roles are divided fairly. Returning troops should check in with each other each year or as new adults join the troop leadership team.

There is no expectation that one adult does it all. DIVIDE AND CONQUER!

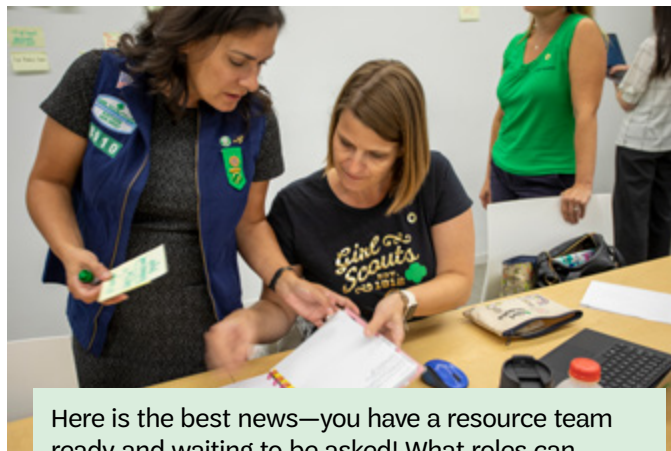
- ▶ This might mean that one adult plans and leads one meeting per month, and the other adult plans and leads the other meeting.
- ▶ This could also mean that one adult plans the meeting, but comes to the meeting with instructions for the other adults to help execute activities.
- ▶ You can also divide the girls into two or more groups and rotate the girls between the different adults.

TROOP LEADERSHIP TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Who will:

- ▶ Contact new families that join the troop?
- ▶ Manage the troop finances?
- ▶ Lead troop meetings?
- ▶ Coordinate field trips and special guests?
- ▶ Manage troop communications (Facebook posts, newsletter, etc.)?
- ▶ Submit travel request forms and reserve council properties?
- ▶ Attend service unit meetings?
- ▶ Set up the VTK year plan?
- ▶ Be the contact person for council inquiries and needs?

When new tasks pop up, take a few minutes to decide together who will take it on.



Here is the best news—you have a resource team ready and waiting to be asked! What roles can parents/caregivers and troop support volunteers take on?

Could they:

- ▶ Help manage the troop finances?*
- ▶ Lead a troop meeting?*
- ▶ Coordinate field trips and special guests?
- ▶ Manage troop communications (Facebook posts, newsletter, etc.)?
- ▶ Submit travel request forms and reserve council properties?
- ▶ Attend service unit meetings?
- ▶ Manage the product programs?*
- ▶ Train and become certified in archery, canoe/kayak, first aid, etc.?*

*For these roles, parent/caregiver must be a registered and background-checked member.

Make it an expectation that every family helps in some way, even if it is small.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES

The Standards and Guidelines for the Policies of Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.

ADOPTION OF GSUSA POLICIES AND STANDARDS

1. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. (GSGCF) accepts and adopts Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) *Blue Book of Basic Documents* as policies governing its members. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. accepts and adopts Girl Scouts of the USA safety and program standards to govern its members.

CRISIS AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

2. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. will maintain a crisis communication plan that will be shared with volunteers as appropriate, and includes the guidelines for responding to the public or media, handling an incident or accident, and reporting an incident or accident.

TROOP/GROUP CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

3. Contributions intended to benefit the Girl Scout program in Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.'s jurisdiction, regardless of value, form, or designated use, shall be made only to Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Any tax deduction available to a donor is determined by the Internal Revenue Code.

TROOP/GROUP MONEY-EARNING

4. Girl Scouts may only participate in money-earning projects in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting. All troops or groups must participate in two council-sponsored money earning programs before seeking approval for additional money-earning opportunities. Exceptions may be made for groups with permission of the CEO. Product programs should provide funds for troops and groups to carry out the Girl Scout program. If additional money is required to carry out program, permission must be secured.

FUNDRAISING POLICY

5. All money and other assets, including property, that are raised, earned, or otherwise received in the name of and for the benefit of Girl Scouting must be held by and authorized by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Such money and other assets must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting. They are the property of and are administered by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. Such assets are not the property of individuals, troops or groups, geographic units, or communities within Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Council, Inc. Use of the council's name for any fundraising purpose by any other organization or entity shall require prior approval of the board of directors, per the *Blue Book of Basic Documents*.

FLORIDA STATE SALES TAX

6. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc., is exempt from paying Florida state sales tax on purchased items. State law requires the exemption to be used exclusively for/ by the corporation. All exempt purchases must be paid with a corporate check; therefore, individuals troops and groups may not use the sales tax exemption for purchases.

BANKING AND FINANCIAL RECORD KEEPING

7. All pathway troops and groups, as identified by Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. shall maintain a non-interest bearing checking account and follow all guidelines for the purpose of program support in geographical or program areas. Finance reports and supporting documentation will be submitted as requested (at a minimum, annually). Accounts must have a minimum of two signatures of individuals who are registered Girl Scouts and are not from the same family or household.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS

8. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc., in the desire to welcome all girls and adults as members and support a quality program, will make available, as funds allow, a program of financial assistance. Guidelines and criteria will be established and reviewed annually to support membership and program needs of girls first, then adult volunteers and troop/group needs, based on a family's ability to pay, program quality, and funds available for assistance, in order to provide the widest reach possible.

SMOKING POLICY

9. Adults are responsible for role-modeling positive behavior. Smoking is never allowed in the presence of girls or on Girl Scout property except in designated areas away from girls. This includes vaping.

ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

10. Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a safe place for girls. No alcohol or illicit drugs may be possessed or consumed in the presence of girls or at Girl Scout functions or on Girl Scout property.

PATHWAY/TROOP/GROUP PROGRAM POLICY

11. All troops and groups will follow the program designed by GSUSA to deliver the highest quality experience for girls, using program standards provided by GSUSA and council initiatives. Adults and girls must work to eliminate risk; ensure safety; and ensure that all policies, standards, guidelines, and risk management procedures are followed.

VOLUNTEER POLICIES CONTINUED

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. wishes to secure and retain the highest caliber of Girl Scout adults in order to provide a positive Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls. The council has adopted the following provisions to facilitate this and as an indication of their intent. Nothing herein constitutes a requirement to maintain a volunteer's commitment for any specific amount of time.

12. There shall be no discrimination against an otherwise qualified adult volunteer by reason of disability or on the basis of age. Furthermore, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, socioeconomic status, or any other legally protected status. In addition, to ensure full equality of opportunity in all operations and activities of the council, non-discrimination policies and procedures shall be utilized in the recruitment, selection, training, placement, and recognition of volunteers. Special emphasis shall be placed upon securing representation of under-represented population groups.
13. All volunteers shall be recruited in a method to attract qualified volunteers for appropriate positions. They will be selected on the basis of council need and their ability to perform the specific volunteer positions and to meet responsibilities of the position including membership as reflected in the specific position description. Selection will be based on the completion of a satisfactory application and background screening. Placement in a volunteer position is limited to the term outlined in the position description (usually one year) and the need of the council. Orientation and training will be provided for the position and must be completed within the specified time. Appointment and reappointment is based on the completion of required responsibilities, position training, satisfactory completion and assessment of the skills and abilities to perform the duties and responsibilities and the needs of the council, satisfactory performance in the position as well as performance adhering to policy, standards, and guidelines. The council has both informal and formal recognition systems to recognize and appreciate volunteers.

14. It is the policy of the organization to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of unlawful or unwelcome harassment, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment. The council expressly prohibits any form of harassment on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion, creed, age, disability, national origin, citizenship, veteran's status, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, socioeconomic status, or any other protected group status. All incidents should be promptly reported to council.
15. Volunteers are expected to fully support the work and mission of GSGCF and GSUSA. Volunteers need to be good role models through open communication, conflict resolution, information sharing, creation of a welcoming environment, and consistent demonstration of a climate of courtesy, respect, and professionalism to girl and adult members and their families, and the community and council staff.

CHILD ABUSE

16. Adults in Girl Scouting are responsible for providing a safe environment for the physical and emotional safety of girls in Girl Scouting. In accordance with local, state, and federal laws, adults must report child abuse to authorities. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc. reserves the right to refuse membership, endorsement, or reappointment, and to dismiss or exclude from affiliation any volunteer who is found guilty of or convicted of child abuse or neglect.

SOCIAL MEDIA

17. Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida will maintain guidelines and standards for the use of social media by volunteers and girls that represents the communication involving Girl Scout activities. All volunteers are required to follow all standards and guidelines, and consider the safety of girls, families, and volunteers as a priority, along with the highest ideals of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Current volunteer policies can be found at www.gsgcf.org under "Forms," "Volunteer Management".

NEW LEADER CHECKLIST

To get you started, here's a list of to-dos to get your troop up and running. We'll break down each one in this guide.

Getting Started...

- ☐ Complete Orientation and Troop Pathway Training. You can visit our website at www.gsgcf.org and click the "Events" tab to find the course that best fits your schedule.
- ☐ Secure a co-leader and troop support volunteers (these are approved volunteer helpers for the troop). Direct them to register as Girl Scout members and complete a background check.
- ☐ Pick a meeting location, date, and time. Secure the meeting location.
- ☐ Recruit at least 12 girls, follow steps to open the troop's bank account.
- ☐ Hold a parent meeting prior to your troop's first meeting.
- ☐ Send an introductory email to troop families including your troop meeting schedule.
- ☐ Identify who will be your troop's Mags & Munchies manager and Cookie Program Manager.
- ☐ Hold your first troop meeting.

September–October

- ☐ Make sure all of your girls are registered.
- ☐ Select and begin a Girl Scout Journey.
- ☐ Attend a service unit meeting and Mags & Munchies manager training.
- ☐ Celebrate Founder's Day–October 31st.

November–December

- ☐ Continue to attend service unit meetings.
- ☐ Attend troop Cookie Program manager training held at service unit meeting.
- ☐ Participate in local Girl Scout events.
- ☐ Walk in parades; hold a troop holiday party.
- ☐ Visit our council website and click on "EVENTS" to see which council programs fit your schedule.
- ☐ Work on your Take Action project.

January–March

- ☐ Continue to attend service unit meetings.
- ☐ Participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program.
- ☐ Meet with girls and set goals.
- ☐ Participate in Thinking Day and the Girl Scout Birthday.
- ☐ Continue to work on your Take Action project, start another Journey, or work on badges and/or petals.
- ☐ Camping with girls is a great summer activity. February and March are a great time to attend Outdoor Skills Training.

April–June

- ☐ Confirm which girls are returning next membership year and register them during Spring Renewal.
- ☐ Hold an end-of-the-year ceremony.
- ☐ Submit your Troop Finance Report.
- ☐ Submit your Troop Year-end Review.
- ☐ Submit a Travel Request Form for summer trips.

Pro Leader Tip

*It's going to be okay.
Take a deep breath.
You've done the
hardest thing—you've
stepped forward.*

VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT

The Girl Scout Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a comprehensive digital tool accessible on your computer, smartphone, or tablet. It is the primary support resource for troop leaders and co-leaders. For volunteers, this resource can replace the hard copy adult leader's guide for Journeys and the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*. Girls will still use their books to enhance their experience and serve as a memento of their fun adventures.

VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT HIGHLIGHTS

- Q:** What will I find in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) and how does it make managing the troop easier?
- A:** Five tabs make managing your troop easier!

RESOURCES

- Visit GSUSA's YouTube channel to check out videos on the VTK.
- If you are having trouble, contact our customer care team at 800-232-4475.
- Sign up for or view the Volunteer Toolkit webinars on our website.

1 MY TROOP	2 YEAR PLAN	3 MEETING PLAN	 	
Plan and organize your troop year. Find and manage your troop roster. Track attendance and girl achievements. Send group or individual emails to all parents/caregivers and adult troop members. Renew annual memberships or edit contact information.	Create a calendar of meetings and events that includes badge work, Journeys, council program opportunities, troop trips, and more.	Communicate with parents/caregivers, co-leaders, and troop assistants. Share upcoming information and what the girls have achieved with follow-up emails sent from each Meeting Plan. Make notes in meeting agendas as reminders for the troop leaders and parents/caregivers.	4 RESOURCES	5 FINANCES
Find a wealth of resources for leaders and parents/caregivers including tips & best practices, helpful videos, product sales information, Safety Activity Checkpoints, Badge Explorer, uniform placement, and more, all in one convenient location.	Use this tab to track your troop finances and submit your annual finance report to council. Parents/caregivers can view a financial summary of the troop's income and expenses.	Use the VTK in a way that makes sense for your troop. Nothing about Girl Scouts is one-size-fits-all, including the Volunteer Toolkit. Use all that the VTK has to offer or choose the features that best fit the needs of your troop. Multi-level troops may find different benefits from single-level troops.	CUSTOMIZABLE	EXCLUSIVE CONTENT
			The VTK is home to some exclusive program content. STEM and Outdoor Journey guides are found exclusively on the VTK. There are options for girls of all Girl Scout program levels and multi-level troops. Select one of these Journeys as the troop Year Plan or add them to your existing plans.	

VOLUNTEER TOOLKIT

As your awesome digital tool, the VTK will help you manage your time and your troop. You can use it to renew troop members, communicate with parents/caregivers, plan your year, and track attendance and badges earned. Consider it your digital assistant! Girl Scouts of the USA maintains this resource and will continue to update content and features to better meet the needs of our busy Girl Scout volunteers. Parents/caregivers have access to a read-only view of the toolkit by logging into their MY GS account. They can view meeting plans and troop activities, access some helpful resources such as uniform placement, and make up activities from meetings their girl misses.

IMPORTANT!

You must be a currently registered member of Girl Scouts and have chosen a leader role in your troop. If you meet these criteria, follow the steps below to set up access to the VTK.

1.	Go to our council website: www.gsgcf.org . PLEASE NOTE: The VTK is not compatible with Internet Explorer. You must use Google Chrome or Safari as your browser.
2.	Click on "MY GS" (in yellow letters on the right).
3.	Click on "Volunteer Toolkit."
4.	Enter your username. The username is the email we have on file for you. If you have several email addresses and are not sure which one was used, please call customer care at 800-232-4475.
5.	After you log in (use the same password as your Member Profile account) you will see several tabs: My Troop , Explore , Meeting Plan , and Resources .
6.	Click on the "My Troop" tab to review your troop's roster, update contact information, or send an email to the parents/caregivers in your troop.

7.	Click on the "Year Plan" tab and click on "Specify Dates and Locations" (in green under the tab) to create a calendar of future meetings and meeting locations. You can choose to not meet on certain holidays, assign meeting locations, and update this information as the year progresses by adding activities or meeting dates.
8.	The "Explore" tab allows you to "Select Your Own" badges, Journeys, and awards to build your troop year plan or choose "Pre-Selected Tracks" to provide you with an auto-generated path of badges, Journeys, and awards to kick-start your year. Then you can add troop activities as your troop sets goals and makes plans for exciting adventures. You can also search and register for GSGCF program events.
9.	Once you've chosen a year plan, you can click on the "Meeting Plan" tab to access meeting plans, materials, and communications. Click on the arrow on the right of each meeting header to advance to future meeting plans.
10.	You can use the categories listed or the search feature under the "Resources" tab to find badges and activities that are not part of your scheduled meeting plans and access other program-level, national, and council resources.

HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS DO YOU NEED?

Understanding How Many Volunteers You Need

Girl Scout troops are large enough to provide a cooperative learning environment and small enough to allow development of individual girls. Girl Scout's volunteer-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls. Your troop must have at least two unrelated, approved volunteers present at all times, plus additional volunteers as necessary depending on the size of the troop and the ages and abilities of girls. Any adult that is supervising girls must be an approved volunteer. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old and screened before volunteering. One troop leader in every troop must be female. Please refer to the ratio chart below.

gs	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for every:	Additional adult to each additional number of girls:	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for every:	Additional adult to each additional number of girls:
Daisies	12	1-6	6	1-4
Brownies	20	1-8	12	1-6
Juniors	25	1-10	16	1-8
Cadettes	25	1-12	20	1-10
Seniors	30	1-15	24	1-12
Ambassadors	30	1-15	24	1-12



Here are some examples of ways to utilize this chart:

If you're meeting with 17 Daisies, you'll need three adults, at least two of whom are unrelated and, at least one of whom is female. This is determined as follows: for up to 12 Daisies you need two adults, and one more adult for up to six additional girls. Since you have 17 girls, you need three adults. However, if you have 17 Cadettes attending a group meeting you need only two unrelated adults, at least one of whom is female, since the chart shows that two adults can manage up to 25 Cadettes.

WHERE & WHEN TO MEET WITH YOUR TROOP

You and your co-leader will work with girls and their families to determine the best time, date, and location to meet.

While it's important to ask for feedback from families as to which dates and times work, ultimately, the troop leader(s) is responsible for deciding the time, date, and location of meetings.

Girls and adults participating in troops can meet once a week, once a month, or twice a month—how often is up to you and your troop members. Most troops meet weekly or twice a month for a combined total of 3-4 hours.

Not sure where to start looking for a meeting space?

Your service unit volunteers could be a big help, since they often have lots of great local knowledge and experience!

Troops can meet just about anywhere, as long as the location is safe, easily accessible to girls and adults, and within a reasonable commute ("reasonable" having different definitions in different areas: in rural areas, a longer drive may be acceptable; in an urban area, a 30-minute bus ride may be too long).

A meeting place needs to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment that allows for participation of all girls. Consider meeting rooms at schools, houses of worship, libraries, community buildings, childcare facilities, and local businesses. Here are a few things to keep in mind when choosing a meeting place (It is not advised for troops to meet at private residences):

SAFETY: You'll want your location to be safe, secure, clean, properly heated/cooled, and free from hazards with all exits clearly marked.

COST: Free or low-cost to use is best!

AVAILABILITY: Be sure the location will be available at the time and date of your meetings.

FACILITIES: Sanitary and accessible restrooms are a must.

ACCESSIBILITY: Be sure to accommodate girls with disabilities and their parents/caregivers.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

As a troop leader, you'll be developing meaningful relationships with the girls in your troop. Parents/caregivers can also provide assistance and experience to your troop, and help make meetings and events run more smoothly. Here are some tips on fostering relationships with your girls' families:

- ▶ Let them know that families and troop leaders need to work together to support the troop. Here are some benefits of parent/caregivers involvement that you can share with families:
 - Parents/caregivers know their children better than anyone else. They can provide insight and help when it comes to planning and problem-solving.
 - Involving parents/caregivers can help keep girls interested in the troop and troop activities.
 - Involved caregivers become closer to their girls, develop an extended social network, and are actively contributing to the community.
- ▶ Ask for help in transporting girls on trips, bringing snacks, sharing special talents with the troop, or by attending troop meetings. Make a check list of tasks you'd like assistance with and have a sign-up sheet to ensure parent/caregiver participation.
- ▶ Communicate often with parents/caregivers (through email or printed updates). Talk to parents/caregivers as they pick up and drop off their girls.

If parents/caregivers will be working directly with girls, they'll need to become registered volunteers. There are many ways that the families can participate in their Girl Scouting experience.

UNIFORMS

Girl Scouts wear uniforms in ceremonies, when officially representing Girl Scouts, and when they want to show their Girl Scout pride. We know girls love acquiring patches, badges, and insignia for their uniforms, and this is definitely one of the most memorable pieces for Girl Scout alums. Here are some basic tips:

- ▶ Sashes are worn from the right shoulder to the left hip.
- ▶ The insignia tab is worn on the left chest, over the heart.
- ▶ All unofficial awards go on the back of the uniform, including cookies, camp, and fun patches.
- ▶ For formal events, sashes, vests, and tunics can be worn with white shirts and khaki pants or skirts.
- ▶ If you run out of space on the front of your uniform, you may place badges and awards on the back.

Badges vs. Patches . . . What's the difference?

Badges are earned by girls through completed steps found in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*. Badges are placed on the front of the uniform.

Fun **patches** are given to girls for attending events or participating in non-Girl Scout program related activities. Patches should be placed on the back of the uniform.



Daisy Tunic



Brownie Sash



Junior Vest



Cadette, Senior,
Ambassador Vest

Our Girl Scout shop staff is awesome, and they understand how confusing finding all of the parts of a uniform can be! One of their tips for new Girl Scouts is to purchase a **My Girl Scout Kit**, which varies in price, depending on which kit you choose.

EACH KIT CONTAINS:

- ▶ A Girl Scout sash, vest, or tunic
- ▶ American flag patch, council ID set, membership pin, insignia tab, World Association pin, and troop number patches
- ▶ *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*
- ▶ One Journey book
- ▶ **FREE** bonus tote bag

Questions about uniforms?

Stop by our retail shop or contact our shop staff at 800-232-4475 and they will be able to answer any of your questions! You can also find specifics on each program level's uniform on our website.

Financial assistance is available.



My Girl Scout Kit prices vary depending on uniform choices.

Sales tax and shipping (if applicable) are not included in the price above.

For more information, please contact the GSGCF Council Shop at 800-232-4475 ext. 328.

GET SOCIAL

Facebook

[GirlScoutsofGulfcoastFlorida](#)

Event information, adult learning news and updates, photos of girls in action, tips and tricks for volunteers, and more!

Leaders and co-leaders will be added to service unit Facebook groups as well.

Instagram

[girlscoutsgulfcoast](#)

Fun photos from across the council.

Twitter

[GSGCF](#)

Tweets about informative articles, blogs, and breaking general news of interest to our members, volunteers, and supporters.

LinkedIn

[girl-scouts-of-gulfcoast-florida-inc-](#)

Links to articles about the Girl Scout Movement and topics related to the health, development, and support of girls.

Pinterest

[gsgcf](#)

Fun ideas for all things Girl Scouting.

YouTube

[GSGCF](#)

Council and GSUSA videos.

Current members with an active email address also receive our monthly family e-newsletter, **S'more News**. Visit our website for links to the most recent editions.

At Girl Scouts, we know social media is a great tool for on-the-go communication! That's why we provide up-to-date information through our social media platforms, so you know what's coming up, the latest Girl Scout news, and how girls and troops are making an impact in our community. Let's get social!

While social media is fun, it's also powerful and permanent. So as a national organization, GSUSA is emphasizing the importance of protecting our brand and intellectual property. Holding ourselves to the highest standard will allow Girl Scouts to continue to be one of the most recognizable and trusted brands in the world. To get permission to use our logo, trefoil, or other trademarks; or to report a misuse of our brand, please contact marketing@gsgcf.org. Our volunteers and girls are our greatest brand protectors and ambassadors.



POWERED BY GIRL SCOUTS



Council-Sponsored Events—www.gsgcf.org/events

There is always a new or unique experience waiting for you at Girl Scouts! Check out our events page for the most up-to-date listing of council-sponsored events and adult trainings.

FAMILY MEETING

Having a family meeting is key to setting up a successful year of Girl Scouting! It's also a great opportunity to ask parents/caregivers for their support throughout the year.

What is a family meeting?

A family meeting is designed to provide an opportunity for troop leaders to connect directly with families and friends to foster engagement with the troop. It's typically held three times a year: before the troop itself meets for the first time, mid-year before the start of cookie season, and as a wrap up to end the program year.

How do I prepare for the family meeting?

Here's a checklist of tasks as you prepare for your meeting:

- ☐ Choose a meeting day and location: Select a date, time, and location that will suit you and your families' needs. When choosing a meeting space, consider a location and time based on the needs of your families' schedules, but know that you might not be able to accommodate everyone. The meeting space should have enough room to accommodate families and their Girl Scout(s) and should ideally be where you plan to meet as a troop throughout the year. This will give girls and families some general familiarity with the location and how to get there.
- ☐ Invite troop families: Prepare and distribute an invitation to all troop families (parents/caregivers) to attend. Introduce yourself, provide the meeting location details, and request forms or materials you need the families to complete (the Parent Consent Form, troop dues, etc.) Be sure to provide blank copies of the forms you need them to complete along with the invitation.
- ☐ Create a girl activity: Plan an activity that the girls can do during the meeting while you chat with the families. This should be an activity that the girls can do by themselves. You can also set aside a nearby area of the meeting space where girls can work on a quiet activity together with your co-leader while you meet with parents/caregivers.

Pro Leader Tip

Set boundaries with your parents/caregivers, and share expectations.

What materials should I prepare before the meeting?

- ▶ Girl activity supplies: materials for the activity you planned, such as creating name tags.
- ▶ Forms: Bring extra copies of Parent Consent Forms. All of these "Forms" can be found on the Gulfcoast website under "Forms", then "Troop Management".
- ▶ Misc. supplies: Name tags, contact list, sign-in sheet.



REQUIRING PARENT/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Encourage the parents/caregivers of the girls in your troop to take ownership of one the leadership roles below. When everyone participates, leading a troop becomes easier and more enjoyable for everyone. Most of the jobs listed below require more than one person, so let parents/caregivers know it's okay to sign up for multiple roles.

TROOP MAGS & MUNCHIES PROGRAM MANAGER

Assist girls and adults through the fall product program including nut, candy, and magazine sales. You may also break up these tasks among several helping adults.

Requirements: Mags & Munchies training, become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application & background screening.

Time Commitment: August–November (1 hour per week)

TROOP COOKIE MANAGER

Assist girls and adults through the Cookie Program. You may also break up these tasks among several helping adults.

Requirements: Cookie Program training, become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application & background screening.

Time Commitment: December–March (4 hours per week)

TREASURER & SIGNER ON BANK ACCOUNT

Help girls manage troop funds, open troop bank account, maintain records, submit financial reports.

Requirements: Become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application & background screening.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 hour per month)

SERVICE UNIT LEADERS' MEETING REPRESENTATIVE

Substitute for leader at local monthly Girl Scout informational meetings.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 hour per month)

FIRST AIDER

Provide first aid and CPR for troop activities as identified in Girl Scout guidelines.

Requirements: Become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application and background screening, and have a current CPR/First Aid Certification. Could also be an LPN, RN, or similar certified adult.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (3 to 4 hours per month or as needed)

TROOP CAMP CERTIFIED

Help girls prepare for camping as well as participate in overnight camps.

Requirements: Become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application & background screening, and complete Girl Scout camp training.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 weekend per year or as needed)

TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL COORDINATOR

Determine transportation needs; schedule and recruit drivers; make campsite reservations and arrangements for field trips. Girl Scout membership highly recommended.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 weekend per year or as needed)

COMMUNITY SERVICE COORDINATOR

Provide ideas and assist with community service projects.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 weekend per year or as needed)

SNACKS COORDINATOR

Coordinate snack for each meeting or purchase snacks using the troop funds.

Time Commitment: Year Round (1 hour per year or as needed)

TROOP MEETING HELPER

Support troop by working with the girls on their activities and projects.

Requirements: Become a registered Girl Scout member, complete volunteer application & background screening.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 meeting per year)

COMMUNICATIONS/NEWSLETTER

Write and deliver troop newsletter via mail or email.

Time Commitment: Year-Round (1 hour per month)

SAMPLE FAMILY MEETING AGENDA

Below is a sample agenda you can follow for your meeting, but remember, this is **your** meeting! Structure it to fit your needs.

Welcome and Introductions

- ▶ Welcome: Greet everyone who attends, and ask them to sign in.
- ▶ Help girls introduce themselves to one another. Have the parents/caregivers wear nametags and add their occupation or favorite hobby on it as well. That way you can begin to see how they might help the troop.
- ▶ Girl Activity: Guide the girls through the activity you've planned for them so they can get settled in before the meeting starts.
- ▶ Introductions: Introduce yourself and any other Girl Scout volunteers present. Have participants introduce themselves and share if they have any Girl Scout experiences. If you do not have a second troop leader yet, explain to families the process of becoming a leader and that two leaders are required for each troop. Explain that the troop leader's role is to work with girls, but that it is the girls' troop, because girls lead! The troop will do activities based on what the girls choose. Explain the Girl Scout mission and how we engage girls in discovering themselves, connecting with others, and taking action to make the world a better place.

Program Information

- ▶ Girl-led: Communicate that troops are girl-led, meaning the girls collectively decide, with your guidance, what they'd like to do as a troop. As they get older, they'll take on more leadership roles. It is important to advise the families that you can provide examples of what programming, badges, and activities that Girl Scouts do, but since the girls will be deciding on these activities along the way, you won't be able to share details until the girls vote on their plans. This will help the parents/caregivers to understand that everything will be girl-led and not directed by adults.
- ▶ Program materials/uniforms: Share the Girl Scout program materials, such as *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* and Journey books specific to your troop's program level. Let families know that the *Guide* will have information about Girl Scouts, as well as the petal/badges and Journeys that will be the basis for their girl's leadership experience. You can decide whether each family will be responsible for purchasing their girl's supplies or if you will collect payments and purchase everything for the troop.

Registration and Forms

- ▶ Registration: Each girl must be registered to participate. Parents/caregivers must also register and complete the approval process (background check) if they will be helping with the troop on a regular basis.
- ▶ Collect Parent Consent Forms: You can find the Parent Consent Form at www.gsgcf.org, on the "Forms" page. After you navigate to the forms page you can search for the form that you would like to download.

Troop Agreement and Girl Behavior

Girls will set troop rules at their first meeting and this will set the expected girl behavior. As girls' behavior may become challenging, the parents/caregivers need to know in advance how this will be handled and that their support and participation in correcting the behavior will be required.

Parent/Caregiver Expectations

- ▶ Even with troop leadership in place, parents/caregivers can still play a role and are important for the success of a troop.
- ▶ Ask for help transporting or chaperoning girls on trips, bringing snacks, sharing special talents, or attending troop meetings. Remind parents/caregivers that any adult that has regular contact with girls, handles money, or chaperones trips must be a registered member and complete a background check. Consult *Safety Activity Checkpoints* (Chapter 4 of *Volunteer Essentials*) or contact customercare@gsgcf.org if you have any questions about who should be registered.

Troop Finances

- ▶ Troop Dues: Use the troop dues formula on page 27 of this guide to determine what is needed. Explain that the membership dues are for the national membership in GSUSA that provides liability insurance for Girl Scout activities. Troop dues are what assist the troop to buy project supplies and any additional badges, and cover meeting expenses.
- ▶ Mags & Munchies and the Cookie Program: The Mags & Munchies and Cookie programs are designed to help girls learn about financial literacy, and develop other "soft skills," and are an opportunity for troops to earn proceeds to fund their Girl Scout experience. However, in the first year, there may be some out-of-pocket expenses, such as field trips, uniforms, and books.

SAMPLE FAMILY MEETING AGENDA CONTINUED

Communication and Meeting Dates

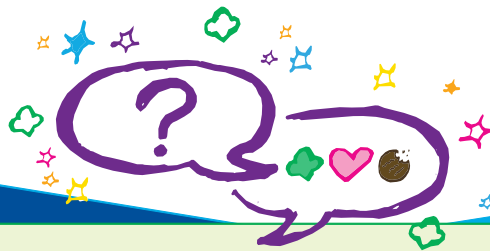
- ▶ Meeting times and location: Meeting days, times, and locations are determined by the troop leader who works with girls' families to find a good time that works for everyone. There is no set requirement as to when or how frequently troops meet. In most cases, troops meet weekly or twice a month for a combined total of 3-4 hours.
- ▶ Troop communication: Talk about how you plan to keep in touch with families about upcoming troop activities, dates, and reminders. Ask the adults to review the phone/email list to ensure their information is correct. Decide on a method of communication that will work best for parents/caregivers (email, phone, text, etc.).

Many leaders utilize email and closed, private groups on Facebook to communicate with their families. Some leaders even create a troop email account that can be used for communication to families. It is important to remember that some people are not "online" and prefer a phone call or a text message reminder. Your families probably don't need to know every detail of what happened during your troop meeting, but they will want to know about big things (like how your troop will be participating in the Cookie Program or if their girl fell and scraped her knee). You can use the Volunteer Toolkit to communicate all throughout the year!

Closing

Thank parents/caregivers for coming. Ask if there are any questions. You can even do a friendship circle with the parents/caregivers and girls, so they get an idea of what girls will experience.

HOORAY, YOU DID IT!



Approaching Conflict



You may encounter a time when you need to have an uncomfortable conversation with a family or another volunteer. First, it is important to remember your role as a Girl Scout. You should be honest and fair, considerate and caring, responsible for what you say and do, and show respect for yourself and others. When you need to facilitate this conversation, approach it from an objective place. Many times, conflict stems from miscommunication. Use "I" statements to demonstrate how actions have made you feel, rather than blaming or judging the person you are talking to. Finally, demonstrate active listening. Respond to the person in a way that shows that you are present and are listening to what they are saying.

MANAGING GIRL BEHAVIOR & TROOP CONFLICT

It is not uncommon for girls or troops to have disagreements or a behavior issue from time to time. The best way to address these topics is to be proactive right from the start! When you take a little bit of time at the beginning of the year to set the tone and expectations for all leaders, girls, and families in your troop, your year will run that much more smoothly. And, when an issue does arise, everyone will be on the same page about how to correct the situation.

Here are a few things you can do now, to help manage conflict down the road:

Create a Troop Agreement

In a troop agreement, leaders and girls work together to come up with an agreed-upon set of rules for troop meetings and outings. Use the Girl Scout Promise and Law to help start the conversation!

1. Brainstorm with girls some different guidelines that could be included in their troop agreement. Create guidelines around treating each other based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law; preventing inappropriate behavior, such as fighting (verbal & physical), bullying, etc.; following directions; listening to leadership and fellow Girl Scouts when speaking; and resolving conflict peacefully.
2. Brainstorm with parents/caregivers how to best handle behavior problems with girls, including steps to correct inappropriate behavior. Use a strike system: Strike 1—Talk to Girl, Strike 2—Talk to Parent/Caregiver, Strike 3—Parent/Caregiver must come to meeting or girl will miss meeting. If you do have continual problems, seek help from experienced volunteers or staff. Do not wait until things become frustrating and unbearable.



3. Discuss expectations for parents/caregivers:

Positive Communication—parents/caregivers and troop leadership are expected to only use positive tones and language with girls and adults.

Support Troop with Activities—Discuss how parents/caregivers can support the troop, including arranging special guests, planning activities, coordinating supplies, etc.

Pick-up/Drop-off Rules—Share with parents/caregivers the pick-up/drop off procedures, including start/end time of troop meetings, activities, and penalties if consistently late.
4. Share Kapers Concept—A kaper chart is a chore chart that will allow all girls to share in the responsibility for the troop, including preparation/cleanup activities, leading parts of opening/closing ceremonies, etc.
5. Once all parts of the agreement have been discussed and agreed upon, compile all rules into a document for each girl and adult to sign.
6. Using a poster, post a copy of guidelines girls will follow at each troop/group meeting to reinforce the troop/group agreement.

Pro Leader Tip
When girls make the troop rules, it's easier for them to follow the rules.

The safety and well-being of girl and adult members is our highest priority. As a troop leader, it's imperative you know and understand the safety policies and procedures in place, and where to look or whom to ask for more information when necessary. Below are some of the main resources where safety policies are listed. Safety policies can seem scary and overwhelming, so know that if you take some time now to review them, you'll feel more confident as you participate in Girl Scouts. And, we've got your back! If you have questions or concerns about safety or responsibilities, give us a call.

Volunteer Essentials

Volunteer Essentials provides all the information you need to be a successful Girl Scout volunteer (and we mean ALL—it's quite a lengthy document, so we encourage you to skim through and become familiar with the different sections). This guide is filled with information about Girl Scouting, such as traditions, responsibilities, and awards. You will also find information specific to volunteering with Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, such as tools, resources, and council-specific policies.

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Safety Activity Checkpoints are safety documents that complement *Volunteer Essentials* and outline policies and guidelines for specific Girl Scouting activities like swimming, hiking, horseback riding, paddle boarding, camping, theme parks, and more! Simply check the activity you wish to do and follow the rules for each one.

For the most accurate and complete information about safety, refer to www.gsgcf.org then click on **Forms**, then **Volunteer Management**.



Don't forget!

You will need to have a first aid kit and a copy of each girl's Parent Consent Form at all troop gatherings. A copy of this guide will also be valuable.

IN THE CASE OF AN ACCIDENT

Procedures to be followed by the person in charge at the scene:

1. Remain calm and think clearly.
2. Give priority attention to secure the appropriate care for the injured person or persons.
3. Secure a doctor, ambulance, clergy, and/or police as appropriate.
4. Retain another responsible adult at the scene of the accident. Do not disturb the victim or surroundings until the police have assumed authority. In the event of a fatality, ALWAYS notify the police.
5. Contact council headquarters to report the situation and to secure additional assistance.
 - ▶ Council headquarters:
941-921-5358 or 1-800-232-4475
6. Contact the parent/caregiver/spouse.
 - ▶ Ask this person to meet you at the medical facility.
 - ▶ Let medical personnel and/or police share the condition of the injured person with family members.
7. Use the Incident Report Form and obtain all the facts about the accident.
 - ▶ What happened
 - ▶ When did it happen
 - ▶ How did it happen
 - ▶ Why did it happen
 - ▶ What is being done
8. Refer all media to the GSGCF Chief Communications and Resource Officer. Make NO comments orally or in writing, which could be interpreted incorrectly. Follow ALL instructions given by council headquarters EXPLICITLY. Diffuse all rumors.
9. In any situation, remove all remaining troop members that are not involved away from the scene of the accident. Girls are to be reassured and kept calm by adults.

Mail or fax Incident Report Form to council within 48 hours.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse affects more than one million children each year in the United States. Physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional maltreatment, and physical neglect are four common types of abuse.

Many abused children show some of the following symptoms: low self-esteem, anger, guilt, aggressiveness, hyperactivity or disruptive behavior, poor school performance, and abuse of drugs and alcohol.

Since child abuse is a crime, there is an agency mandated in every state to receive and investigate reports of suspected child abuse.

Under Florida law, if you have reason to suspect a child may be the victim of abuse or threatened with harm, you **MUST** report the case for further investigation to the Florida Abuse Hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873). If you need support or guidance in filing your report, council staff will be happy to assist you.

IF A GIRL SAYS SHE HAS BEEN ABUSED:

- ▶ TREAT WHAT THE GIRL HAS SAID AS FACT.
- ▶ ASSURE HER THAT THE ABUSE IS NOT HER FAULT.
- ▶ COMMEND HER FOR TELLING YOU ABOUT IT.
- ▶ BE SYMPATHETIC AND NONJUDGMENTAL.
- ▶ DO NOT TRY TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION THAN A GIRL SHARES (LEAVE THE INVESTIGATION TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY TO DO SO).
- ▶ REPORT IT TO THE FLORIDA ABUSE HOTLINE AT 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

Some possible signs of abuse are:

- ▶ Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, burns, or fractures.
- ▶ Excessive fearfulness or distrust of adults.
- ▶ Abusive behavior toward other children, especially younger ones.
- ▶ Avoidance of physical contact.

If you suspect that a girl has been abused, but you have not been specifically told about it, do the following:

- ▶ Consult with the council to determine the appropriate course of action.
- ▶ Report the suspected abuse to the Florida Abuse Hotline: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

SINCE ABUSE CAN HAPPEN IN ANY ENVIRONMENT, VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF WHO WORK WITH GIRLS SHOULD:

- ▶ BE FAMILIAR WITH AND OBSERVE ALL COUNCIL GUIDELINES RELATING TO PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE.
- ▶ FOLLOW ADULT SUPERVISION GUIDELINES OUTLINED IN *SAFETY ACTIVITY CHECKPOINTS* AND ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO RISK OF ABUSE IN THE GIRL SCOUT SETTING.

As Girl Scout leaders and volunteers, we have a moral, ethical, and legal responsibility to report any suspected child abuse. **ONCE YOU SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE, YOU NEED TO ACT TO PROTECT THE CHILD FROM FURTHER POSSIBLE HARM.** It does not matter if you are wrong—it's better to be wrong than sorry. The child's safety is the immediate issue—you could save her life. While all suspicions and accusations may not turn out to be true, all deserve attention and immediate action with the help of professionals. Each girl deserves to be heard, protected, and helped, no matter what.

NEVER FORGET THAT THE CHILD IS THE VICTIM.

SETTING UP YOUR TROOP MEETINGS

Each Girl Scout meeting provides an opportunity to explore the world and learn new skills. As a troop leader, you can customize your year and the activities in each meeting with your girls. Flexibility is key based on the needs and interests of your girls. You might have a meeting where you do just one activity, and then your next meeting may include three activities. Typical meetings are 60 minutes once a week or 90 minutes every other week. Meetings consists of:

Pre-Meeting

This is the period before the meeting officially begins.

Troop leaders, parents/caregivers, and girls can use this time to chat and greet one another. Since you will be talking and setting up, the girls should have an easy, self-directed activity to engage their attention.

Opening (5 mins)

The official start of the meeting. Opening activities:

- ▶ Focus the girls on the meeting
- ▶ Are chosen by the girls
- ▶ Often include the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- ▶ May include a simple flag ceremony, song, game, or story

Business Meeting (5–10 mins)

This is the time for special announcements, dues, attendance, making plans, deciding/voting on activities, and other troop business. During the business meeting, girls will learn how to lead, influence others, and communicate feelings and opinions. Little by little, allow girls to take responsibility for more of the business of the troop. Depending on how much you have to discuss, this section could also be done as part of your opening.

Activities (20–40 mins)

Girls get a chance to build skills, try new things, explore their interests, and work cooperatively with others. Girls help plan the activities they'll do during troop meetings. These can include:

- ▶ Ideas from leadership Journeys or *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*
- ▶ Badge activity
- ▶ Physical activity (active games, etc.)
- ▶ Outdoor time/field trip



Snack Time (10 mins, optional)

Depending on the age range of your girls, troops may need some time to take a break and eat a quick snack. Parents/caregivers/girls can take turns bringing in snacks.

Clean-up (10 mins)

Clean-up teaches girls to be responsible and allows girls to practice the Girl Scout tenant: “Leave things better than you found them.” Use a kaper chart to split up the tasks fairly amongst the troop.

Closing (5 mins)

The official end of the meeting. During this time, you can remind the girls of what you reviewed during today's meeting, what's coming up in the next meeting or activity, and end on a positive note. Many troops like to close the meeting with a traditional Friendship Circle.

KAPER CHARTS

A kaper is a job or chore that must be done. In Girl Scouting, a kaper chart is prepared and indicates the available jobs and who is responsible for each one. In other words it is a way to divide the responsibilities of the troop meeting so girls each have a part.



To make a kaper chart, first decide:

1. Which kapers should be divided
2. Whether the kapers should be handled by groups of girls or individuals
3. If groups, the number of girls
4. How to rotate the girls so each girl is involved

Don't forget the most important thing...

Have Fun!

PROGRESSIONS

PROGRAM LEVEL	GRADES	WHAT ARE THEY UP TO IN GIRL SCOUTS?	WHAT ARE THEY LIKE?
Girl Scout <i>Daisies</i>	K - 1	▶ Learn the Girl Scout Promise and Law ▶ Earn petals, badges, and Journey awards	▶ Lots of energy! ▶ Beginning to understand basic number concepts ▶ Just learning how to write and spell
Girl Scout <i>Brownies</i>	2 - 3	▶ Earn badges and Journey awards ▶ Can attend overnight camps	▶ Are social and enjoy working in groups ▶ Want to help and can handle individual responsibilities of a task ▶ Love to act in plays, create music, and dance
Girl Scout <i>Juniors</i>	4 - 5	▶ Earn badges and Journey awards ▶ Can earn the Bronze Award ▶ Start to be viewed as role models for younger Girl Scouts	▶ Want to make decisions and express opinions ▶ Are aware of expectations and sensitive to the judgments of others ▶ Are social and enjoy doing things in groups
Girl Scout <i>Cadettes</i>	6 - 7 - 8	▶ Earn badges and Journey awards ▶ Can earn the Silver Award ▶ Can be a Program Aide	▶ Are spending more time with peer groups than family and concerned about relationships and friends their own age ▶ Can be very self-conscious ▶ Are navigating their increased independence
Girl Scout <i>Seniors</i>	9 - 10	▶ Earn badges and Journey awards ▶ Can earn the Gold Award ▶ Can be a Program Aide	▶ Are beginning to clarify their own values and considering other view points ▶ Strong problem-solving and critical thinking skills ▶ Feel they have lots of responsibilities and pressures
Girl Scout <i>Ambassadors</i>	11 - 12	▶ Earn badges and Journey awards ▶ Can earn the Gold Award ▶ Can be a Program Aide	▶ Can see complexity of situations and controversial issues ▶ Enjoy expressing their individuality ▶ Feel that there are more responsibilities and pressures

GIRL DECISION-MAKING AND PLANNING

Please see *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for the activity you are participating in.

This is the process by which the girls, with their leaders or another adult, take an active role in the decision-making process of planning an activity or event. By using various methods such as brainstorming and voting, the girls learn to make choices. Everyone should have a voice in the planning process.

Techniques for conflict resolution can also be found in *Volunteer Essentials*. Younger girls need more adult help, but can make choices between two and three items. As the girls get older and have more experience and skill at decision-making, they should and will need less adult help.

GIRL SCOUT DAISY	GIRL SCOUT BROWNIE	GIRL SCOUT JUNIOR	GIRL SCOUT CADETTE	GIRL SCOUT SENIOR	GIRL SCOUT AMBASSADOR
Leader/Advisor Share					Girl Share

Program should be FUN and be PROGRESSIVE!

Progression is determined by when the girl is READY and she has mastered the previous step.

LET THE GIRLS DO IT!

*Remember . . .
for all steps, you should
evaluate along the way.*

Step 5. Girls plan and carry out program.

Girls decide goals and plan program. They must have experience for this step. "You decided to go camping; you set up your kaper chart and program. Let me know what you want me to do."

Step 4. Adults with girls set broad goals based on ideas gathered from girls. Girls plan activities.

"Since you chose the Interest Project 'Eco-Action' and you want to work in the wetlands, I will find someone to teach you about invasive plants."

Step 3. Gather girls' ideas.

Use "Guided Discovery" questions. Adults' share and girls' share are equal. "What would you like to try to cook that you've never prepared before?"

Step 2. Adult plans event, girls make decisions on details.

"Monday will be 'N' day. What can we plan to do that starts with 'N'?"

Step 1. Yes/No decisions, or either/or choices.

"Do we want to play soccer?"; "Would you like to go on a hike or play a game?"; give choices among several foods for a cookout.

INCLUSIVITY

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida embraces girls of all abilities, backgrounds, and heritages, with a specific and positive philosophy of inclusion that benefits everyone. Each girl—without regard to socioeconomic status, race, physical or cognitive ability, ethnicity, primary language, or religion—is an equal and valued member of the group, and groups reflect the diversity of the community.

Inclusion is an approach and an attitude, rather than a set of guidelines. Inclusion is about belonging, about all girls being offered the same opportunities, about respect and dignity, and about honoring the uniqueness of and differences among us all.

You're accepting and inclusive when you:

- ▶ Welcome every girl and focus on building community.
- ▶ Emphasize cooperation instead of competition.
- ▶ Provide a safe and socially comfortable environment for girls.
- ▶ Honor the intrinsic value of each person's life.
- ▶ Have respect for, understanding of, and dignity toward all girls and their families.
- ▶ Actively reach out to girls and families who are traditionally excluded or marginalized.
- ▶ Foster a sense of belonging to community as a respected and valued peer.



TROOP FINANCES

Girl Scout groups are financed by dues, money-earning activities, and a share of money earned through council-sponsored product program activities. Specifically, “group money-earning” refers to activities following a planned budget and carried out by girls and adults, in partnership, to earn money for the group treasury. Girls should be included in all aspects of the troop finances and parents/caregivers should be regularly informed. Girls learn valuable skills by participating in troop finances, including:

- ▶ Goal setting
- ▶ Decision-making
- ▶ Money management
- ▶ People skills
- ▶ Business ethics

Opening a Troop Bank Account

Visit www.gsgcf.org → **forms** → **banking** and submit the Bank Signer Request Form.

Troop Dues

Discuss the need with parents/caregivers for some startup funds or weekly dues. These should cover some of the basic costs involved for troop supplies. Be flexible wherever possible as families may have financial hardships that arise. Average troop dues are between \$2-6 per meeting depending on how often the troop meets. Teach girls financial responsibility for their troop dues at every program level. Younger girls can be the “treasurer” for the meeting and help collect the dues, mark off the girls’ names, add up the money, and help an adult fill out the deposit slip. A girl and her parent/caregiver could even take the funds to the bank. Older girls can help complete a check to reimburse a leader and read a treasurer’s report during the meeting.

Council-Sponsored Product Programs

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida currently has two council-sponsored product programs: the Mags & Munchies Program, which includes the opportunity for girls to reach out to friends and family to sell nuts, candy, and magazine subscriptions, and the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Both should be considered as the primary way troops finance their Girl Scout experience. We desire girls to learn to self-support their troop activities and not always ask parents/caregivers to finance their activities. This will help girls learn valuable life skills that will help them as young adults getting out on their own.

Money-Earning Guidelines

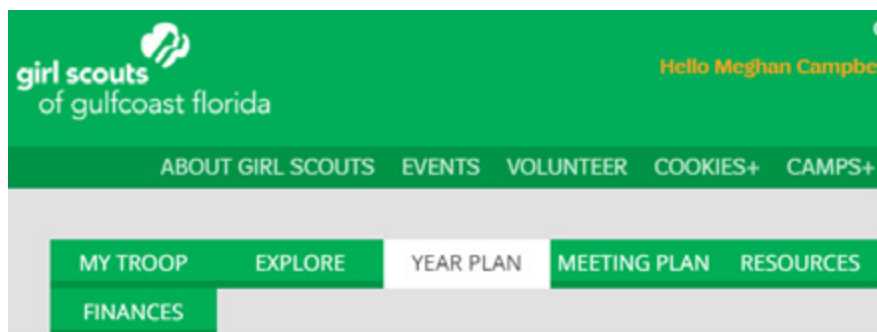
If additional funds are needed for a project, you should start by sharing needs and ideas with a volunteer coach or service unit manager in your area. They may have creative ideas for how you can meet your troop’s needs. Money-earning activities beyond council-sponsored product programs require council approval. Please see *Volunteer Essentials* (Troop Finances) for complete information.

FINANCIAL REPORT



Finance reports are submitted through the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) Finance Tab. This is an easy way to submit your troop's finance report in just a few steps.

Log in to your VTK through the **"MY GS"** link on the Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida website. Click on "Volunteer Toolkit."



1. Insert your troop's cumulative income and expenses for the year in each category.
2. Finalize your report to send by the due date, June 1, and answer a few questions about your troop.
3. Submit your report to council. (You can edit your report at any time during the year before submitting. Once submitted, reports cannot be edited.)

If you need assistance logging in, contact customercare@gsgcf.org. Only troop leaders and co-leaders have access to the VTK. If you have a troop treasurer, they will need the assistance of a leader or co-leader to complete the finance report. You will need to keep all receipts for troop transactions. To make filling out the report easier, mark which category the receipt is for from the list of income and expenses below. You can then tally the totals for each category and enter the amount on the Finance Tab. Troops may wish to use Excel, Quicken, or similar programs.

The income categories are:

- ▶ GSUSA Membership Fees
- ▶ Troop Dues
- ▶ Individual Donations
- ▶ Cookie Program
- ▶ Mags and Munchies
- ▶ Program/Event Income
- ▶ Money-Earning Projects
- ▶ Other Income



The expense categories are:

- ▶ GSUSA Membership Fees
- ▶ Recognitions
- ▶ Events
- ▶ Permanent Troop Supplies
- ▶ Program Supplies
- ▶ Service Projects
- ▶ Cookie Program Council Proceeds
- ▶ Mags and Munchies Council Proceeds
- ▶ Troop Trips and Travel
- ▶ Other Expenses

TROOP BUDGETS

Set Goals: While setting goals, girls and adults plan what to do throughout the year and budget accordingly. Keep the girls and parents/caregivers informed on plans and goals and how you intend to reach those goals.

INCOME	AMOUNT	EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Troop Dues (amount of dues x number of girls x number of troop meetings)	\$4 per meeting x 2 per month x 10 months <u>x 10 girls</u> = \$800	Recognition Items (pins and patches)	\$25/girl <u>X 10 girls</u> = \$250
Cookie Program (bonus per box x number of boxes sold)	50 boxes per girl x 10 girls = 500 boxes <u>x \$0.75/box</u> = \$375	Troop Equipment (first aid kit, camping equipment, service projects, etc.)	\$50
Mags & Munchies Program (profit per item x number sold)	20 items per girl x 10 girls = 200 items @ approx. \$6 = \$1,200 <u>x 10%</u> = \$120	Activity Supplies	\$1.50/activity x 20 meetings <u>x 10 girls</u> = \$300
		Troop Party (holidays, food, cake, drinks, decorations, special craft)	\$100
		Program Fees (entry fees, event registration)	\$5/event x 2 events/year <u>x 10 girls</u> = \$100
		Trips	Avg. Daisy trip = \$200 Avg. Brownie trip = \$250
		Other (postage, troop library)	
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,295	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,000 Daisies \$1,050 Brownies

SUGGESTED TROOP SUPPLIES

- ☐ Pack of pencils (sharpened)
- ☐ Two or three packs of colored markers (in one container)
- ☐ Four or five small containers of glue (or one pint size)
- ☐ Recycled bottled caps (to put glue and paint in for use)
- ☐ Box of cotton swabs for spreading glue, one or two packages of paint brushes for paint
- ☐ Six-ten plastic cups for water (try to use recycled yogurt cups)
- ☐ Large package of 9 x 12 colored construction paper
- ☐ One package of lined paper
- ☐ One package of plain white paper
- ☐ Six-eight pairs of children's scissors
- ☐ Three rolls of scotch tape
- ☐ One roll masking tape
- ☐ Small containers of different colored paints (pour paint into caps for girls to use)
- ☐ One package of 3 x 5 index cards
- ☐ Old newspaper or plastic tablecloth for messy projects
- ☐ Manila or pocket folders; one for each girl (to hold paperwork at each meeting)
- ☐ Stapler and staples
- ☐ Play-dough for special craft time
- ☐ Puzzles, card games, soft balls for special activity time when needed

Put all items in a box that can be transported to each meeting with you. Box can be put in a rolling cart if needed.

PROGRAM: JOURNEYS & BADGES/PETALS

The Girl Scout program focuses on our mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. We know that this part can be overwhelming and the program may look different than it did if you were a Girl Scout as a girl. Journeys and badges are the backbone of the program and will provide girls with a well-rounded Girl Scout experience!

Remember: as the leader, you get to customize the experience so it will fit for your girls!

Journeys

Girl Scout Journeys lay the foundation for girls to build leadership skills while learning about themselves and their world. Each Journey is made up of Discovering, Connecting, and Taking Action (or the three “Keys to Leadership”).

Through the Discover portion of the Journey, girls learn about broader topics, such as the importance of water or how to tell a story. Then, during the Connect portion, girls see how topics they learned during Discover connect to their world. Finally, through Taking Action, girls plan and implement a Take Action project that addresses a need in their community.

There are a variety of Journeys, with availability for different program levels.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP JOURNEYS						
Journey Series	Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
It's Your World—Change It!	Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden	Brownie Quest	Agent of Change	aMAZE!	GIRLtopia	Your Voice, Your World
It's Your Planet—Love It!	Between Earth and Sky	WOW! Wonders of Water	GET MOVING!	Breathe	Sow What?	Justice
It's Your Story—Tell It!	5 Flowers, 4 Stories, 3 Cheers for Animals!	A World of Girls	aMUSE	MEdia	MISSION: SISTERHOOD	BLISS: Live It! Give It!
Outdoor STEM	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist	Think Like a Citizen Scientist
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think Like a Citizen Scientist			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like a Citizen Scientist		
Engineering	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer	Think Like an Engineer
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think Like an Engineer			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like an Engineer		
Outdoors	Daisy Outdoor Journey	Brownie Outdoor Journey	Junior Outdoor Journey	Cadette Outdoor Journey	Senior Outdoor Journey	Ambassador Outdoor Journey
Computer Science	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer	Think Like a Programmer
	MULTI-LEVEL D/B/J Think like an Engineer			MULTI-LEVEL C/S/A Think Like an Engineer		

Badges/Petals

Girl Scouts earn badges that demonstrate a proficiency in a progression of skill-building activities. Generally, these activities connect to a specific subject matter (for example, first aid or animal habitats). Some even complement Journey activities. Skill-building areas include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), Life Skills, Leadership, and Entrepreneurship.

Brownies through Ambassadors earn badges. Girl Scout Daisies earn badges, petals, and leaves. Each petal correlates to a line from the Girl Scout Law and the leaves focus on Financial Literacy.



CEREMONIES

Here at Girl Scouts, we think ceremonies are a great way to celebrate different aspects of the Girl Scout year, from first joining the Girl Scout family and honoring themes that are important to girls, to bridging into a new program level and everything in between. Come on! Who doesn't love to celebrate?

Investitures

Investitures (mark this term in your glossary!) are a way to welcome new members into the Girl Scout family. During an investiture ceremony, new girls are presented with the Girl Scout Pin in front of friends and families. Your troop can host this ceremony at the beginning of the year (usually in September or October), and there are many ways you can conduct the ceremony!

Rededication

Generally, investitures are tied to a rededication ceremony. Rededication is a time for current members to reconnect with the Girl Scout mission and their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Consider a rededication ceremony for your second year.

Girl Scouts' Own Ceremony

A Girl Scouts' Own ceremony is completely girl-led and planned. The ceremony centers around a theme, such as nature, service, or sisterhood. These ceremonies can include, but are not limited to, spoken word, songs, poetry, or dance. It is important that it encompasses the girls' expression of their feelings on the topic picked out by the troop. Try this one a couple months into the year, once your girls feel more comfortable around one another.

Court of Awards

Another common ceremony is the Court of Awards. This ceremony recognizes girls' accomplishments throughout the year. It can be held at any time during the year and wherever the troop or service unit wishes it to be. The Court of Awards includes both girls and volunteers.

Flag Ceremonies

Flag ceremonies are used to honor the American flag and occur at the beginning and end of an event and/or meeting. While not a required part of troop meetings, it is recommended for girls to have some familiarity with the process of the flag ceremony.

Bridging Ceremonies

Bridging ceremonies signify a girl's move from one level of Girl Scouting to another (for example, Girl Scout Daisies to Girl Scout Brownies). It is a ceremony that provides girls an opportunity to reflect on their achievements and look forward to new adventures and responsibilities to come. Traditionally, girls cross over a bridge (this can be a real bridge or something your girls make), sharing what they have learned at their level.

A special bridging ceremony for Girl Scout Brownies is called a "Fly Up," when a girl receives her Girl Scout pin along with her Brownie wings. Put this one on the back burner until girls are ready to bridge from Brownies to Juniors.

Young Women of Distinction

Young Women of Distinction is our council awards ceremony, hosted annually in May. Girls of all ages from across the council are honored on stage for highest awards and program recognitions.



For more details on ceremonies, including how to conduct your own with your troop, visit our national website at: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/traditions/ceremonies.html>

GLOSSARY

Ambassador	A Girl Scout in 11 th or 12 th grade.
Badges	Girls earn badges in a variety of skill areas to help them grow into well-rounded adults. Badges are official awards worn on the front of the sash or vest.
Bridging	Girls graduate from one program level to another (Daisy to Brownie, Brownie to Junior, etc.) in a bridging ceremony. When girls complete the steps outlined in <i>The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting</i> , they earn a rainbow bridging award.
Brownie	A Girl Scout in 2 nd or 3 rd grade.
Buddy System	Girl Scouts always use this safety practice of pairing by twos. This system is often useful on field trips and outings.
Cadette	A Girl Scout in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade.
Court of Awards	A ceremony to present badges and earned recognitions at any program level typically held at the end of the school year.
Daisy	A Girl Scout in Kindergarten or 1 st grade. Also Juliette Gordon Low's nickname!
Friendship Circle	Girl Scouts, both girls and adults, stand in a circle holding hands, right arm over left arm, which stands for the unbroken chain of friendship with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides around the world.
Friendship Squeeze	Within a friendship circle, one person gently squeezes the hand of the next person and the squeeze is silently passed around the circle.
Fly Up	When Brownies bridge to Juniors, it's called "flying up." This is how they earn their Brownie wings. Girls who fly up from Brownies can wear their wings on their vest/sash at every future program level.
G.I.R.L.	When she's a Girl Scout, she's also a G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader) TM . These traits define girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. This is the Girl Scout DNA.
Girl-Led	An idea that girls of every program level take an active role in determining what, where, when, why, and how they'll structure activities. Adults provide guidance, ensuring that planning, organization, and set-up are age-appropriate. Evaluation of all activities is done jointly with girls and is integral to a high-quality Girl Scout experience.
Girl Scout Handshake	Formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts by shaking with the left hand, while giving the Girl Scout sign with the right hand.
Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE)	The Girl Scout program. The GSLE includes Three Keys to Leadership: girls Discover themselves and others, Connect with others, and Take Action to make the world a better place. Activities are girl-led, which gives girls the opportunity to learn by doing in a cooperative learning environment.

GLOSSARY

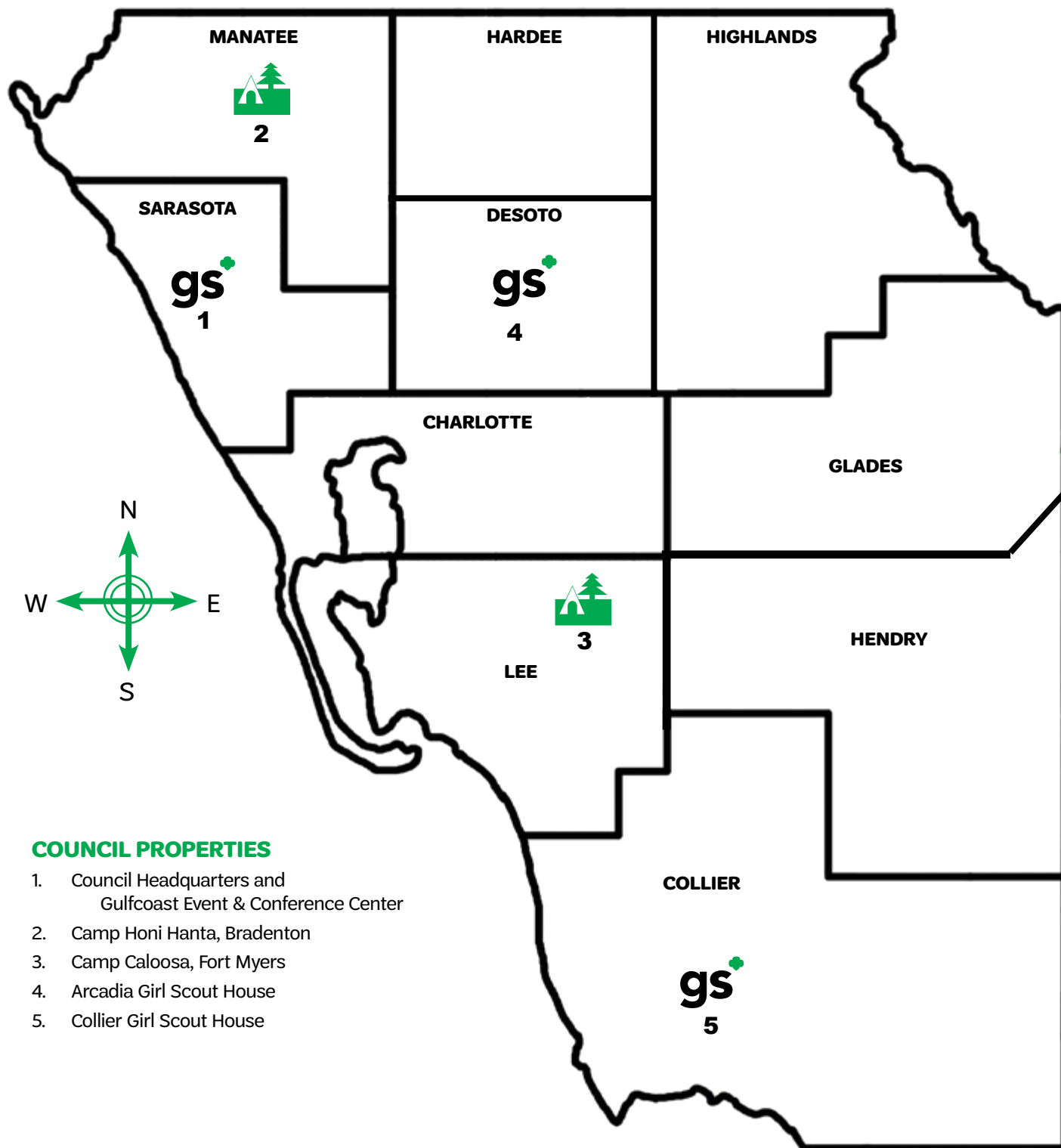
Girl Scout Sign	Official Girl Scout greeting. The right hand is raised shoulder high with the three middle fingers extended and the thumb crossing over the palm to hold down the little finger.
Girl Scout Week	Annual celebration during the week of March 12 (the Girl Scout Birthday) to celebrate the beginning of Girl Scouts in the United States.
Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)	National organization of Girl Scouts headquartered in New York, NY. Membership dues are paid to GSUSA. Their website is www.girlscouts.org .
<i>The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting</i>	A guidebook for each program level full of information about being a Girl Scout and how to earn legacy badges.
Highest Awards (Bronze, Silver, Gold)	The highest awards that a Junior (Bronze), Cadette (Silver), and Senior/Ambassador (Gold) can earn by completing a specific Take Action Project.
Insignia	Girl Scout official emblem, buttons, badges, pins, and other official forms of recognition that may be worn on the uniform by registered members.
Investiture	A special ceremony in which a new member accepts the Girl Scout Promise and Law and receives the membership pin.
Journeys	The key program component to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Journeys teach today's Girl Scouts what it takes to be a leader. There are Journey series for each program level where girls will learn the three "keys to leadership," Discover, Connect, and Take Action.
Junior	A Girl Scout in 4 th or 5 th grade.
Kaper Chart	A chart that divides the jobs within the troop/group. The chart typically rotates or can easily be changed so that everyone experiences each job and has the opportunity for leadership.
Membership Dues	An annual fee to Girl Scouts of the USA for registration which goes directly to national headquarters.
Online Member Community	Where troop leaders and members login to renew their Girl Scout membership (MY GS).
Patches/Fun Patch	Unofficial recognitions for participation in a troop/group or council-wide event that are worn on the back of the sash or vest.
Program Aide Training	This training is available for older girls (Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors) and focuses on deepening leadership skills and building up older girls to be mentors to younger girls.
Program Level	Girl Scouting is divided into six different program levels: Daisy (K-1) • Brownie (2-3) • Junior (4-5) Cadette (6-8) • Senior (9-10) • Ambassador (11-12)
Quiet Sign	Girl Scout signal for silence in a group situation. The person in charge raises her/his right hand and Girl Scouts fall silent as they raise their right hand also.

GLOSSARY

Safety Activity Checkpoints	Safety documents that complement <i>Volunteer Essentials</i> : which outline policies and guidelines for specific Girl Scouting activities. Examples include swimming, hiking, horseback riding, paddle boarding, camping, and theme parks.
Senior	A Girl Scout in 9 th or 10 th grade.
Service Project	A project that is done for the community and addresses an immediate, short-term need in the community, such as volunteering.
Service Unit	Geographic unit of troops/groups within a region led by experienced volunteers who support leaders and troops.
Service Unit Manager (SUM)	An experienced volunteer who manages the local service unit.
Slogan & Motto	The Girl Scout slogan is “Do a good turn daily.” The Girl Scout motto is “Be prepared.”
Take Action Project	A project that is done WITH the community, addresses the root cause of a community issue, and has long-term impact.
Trefoil	International symbol of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting. The trefoil represents the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise.
Troop Dues	A small amount of money girls bring to each meeting or to kick off the year to help cover the cost of basic troop supplies. Each troop decides whether or not to charge dues and sets the amount.
Troop Pathway Training (TPT)	Training for leaders and co-leaders that explains the program, working with girls, parts of a troop meeting, and so much more!
Volunteer Essentials	A comprehensive resource for volunteers that covers topics on safety, responsibilities, traditions, the Girl Scout Program, troop finance, and more.
World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)	Worldwide organization of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts with 150 member countries to which GSUSA belongs. WAGGGS headquarters is in London, England.
World Thinking Day (WTD)	Celebrated since 1926, World Thinking Day is a day of international friendship, speaking out on issues that affect girls and young women, and fundraising for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts around the world. Girls traditionally learn about the cultures and traditions of WAGGGS member countries.

COUNCIL MAP - BY COUNTY

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida, Inc.



COUNCIL PROPERTIES

1. Council Headquarters and Gulfcoast Event & Conference Center
2. Camp Honi Hanta, Bradenton
3. Camp Caloosa, Fort Myers
4. Arcadia Girl Scout House
5. Collier Girl Scout House





girl scouts of gulfcoast florida

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www.gsgcf.org

Facebook

[GirlScoutsofGulfcoastFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/GirlScoutsofGulfcoastFlorida)

Event information, adult learning news and updates, photos of girls in action, tips and tricks for volunteers, and more!

Instagram

[girlscoutsgulfcoast](https://www.instagram.com/girlscoutsgulfcoast)

Fun photos from across the council.

Twitter

[GSGCF](https://twitter.com/GSGCF)

Tweets about informative articles, blogs, and breaking general news of interest to our members, volunteers, and supporters.

LinkedIn

[girl-scouts-of-gulfcoast-florida-inc-](https://www.linkedin.com/company/girl-scouts-of-gulfcoast-florida-inc-)

Links to articles about the Girl Scout Movement and topics related to the health, development, and support of girls.

Pinterest

[gsgcf](https://www.pinterest.com/gsgcf)

Fun ideas for all things Girl Scouting.

YouTube

[GSGCF](https://www.youtube.com/GSGCF)

Council and GSUSA videos.

Current members with an active email address also receive our monthly family e-newsletter, **S'more News**. Visit our website for links to the most recent editions.