







New Leader's Guide to Success











NEW LEADER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS



Welcome to Girl
Scouts! I hope you're
excited to get started
in the best leadership
development organization
for girls in the world!

for girls in the world!
Serving as a troop
leader is a commitment
to helping girls become
their best selves by
fostering a rich Girl

Scout experience. Encourage your girls to take the lead and make collaborative decisions about how to naviagte your year. When girls have the chance to make decisions, they learn team work and develop the confidence to advocate for their ideas. The information in this guide gives you the tools you need to get started on an extraordinary year with your Girl Scouts. Thank you for believing in the power of G.I.R.L. (Go-getter, Innovator, Risk-taker, Leader.)TM

Here's to a wonderful year!

Jennifer K. Bartkowski CEO, Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas

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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.

Our Mission

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



You-A Girl Scout Leader!

Being a Girl Scout leader is an incredible journey along which you'll shape the future by working with girls today. With your guidance, encouragement, and go-getting spirit, your Girl Scouts will be ready to embark on a lifetime of leadership, success, and adventure. And along the way, you'll hone your own leadership style and discover that you'll achieve more than you thought possible!

In Girl Scouting, leadership is about more than "being in charge" or having a title; it's recognizing that you're part of a team and understanding that team's needs and interests.







Leadership is teaching girls:

- That they can do and be anything!
- That they are decision-makers and should own their decisions
- How to live the Girl Scout Law by modeling it for them

As a leader, see yourself as a coach who:

- Guides and instructs
- Advises and discusses
- Ensures each girl can carry out her responsibilities within the troop
- Encourages girls to build their skills and their ethics
- Assigns more responsibilities to the girls as they grow and develop

It's important to remember that:

- You can't expect to know everything the girls want to learn
- You'll explore and learn alongside your girls and grow your confidence in the process
- You're not expected to know everything about Girl Scouting, but you should know where to go for information—and to ask for help when you need it

Volunteer Resources

The Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is your official source for delivering easy, fun troop meetings year-round! This fully customizable digital planning tool provides you with Girl Scout program content, award requirements, and other resources, so you can keep your Girl Scout year running smoothly. Accessible on any computer, tablet, or mobile device, the Volunteer Toolkit lets troop leaders:

- Explore meeting topics and program activities with their girls
- Print step-by-step activity guides and shopping list
- Manage girl attendance and track achievements
- Add local events

- Edit the troop roster and update contact information
- Renew members
- Track and share financial information
- Message and share meeting activities with troop families

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CLASSES GIVE YOU CONFIDENCE TO LEAD

Troop Leader Training

TR100: Girl Scouts to a T – New Leader Welcome is required training for new leaders and may be taken in-person (recommended) or online in the New Leader Academy. In addition, take your daughter to a TR101: Girl Scout Meeting 101 class. TR100 + TR101 = Your BEST first year! New leaders also find TR200: GSLE 3-4-5 to be a helpful course to grasp the value and mechanics of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, which centers on 3 processes, 4 pillars and 5 outcomes for a great troop year. Find class dates and locations at gsnetx.org/training

... plus so much more! Learn more and access the Volunteer Toolkit at gsnetx.org/vtk

Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting

What does it mean to be a go-getting Girl Scout? These grade level-specific binders will help you break it down for your girls. It's part handbook, part badge book, and 100% fun! gsnetx.org/shop

Safety Activity Checkpoints

This guide has everything you need to know to be prepared and keep your girls safe during a range of activities outside the normal Girl Scout troop meeting. It can be found in the gsnetx.org/safetycheckpoints

Volunteer Essentials

With key information, policies, and procedures that support the safe and consistent delivery of Girl Scout programming to girls across the council, *Volunteer Essentials* is just that—essential. By agreeing to be a Girl Scout volunteer, you agree to follow the items outlined in this resource. *Volunteer Essentials* is updated annually, and the newest version can always be found on our website. Find it at gsnetx.org/volunteeressentials

Tips for Troop Leaders

When you're looking for real-world advice from fellow troop leaders who've been there, this volunteer-to-volunteer resource on the Girl Scouts of the USA website has the tips you need for a successful troop year.

Find it at girlscouts.org/tipsfortroopleaders



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

What makes Girl Scouts truly unique? Everything is designed especially for, and is tested by, girls! Our program centers around our research-backed Girl Scout Leadership Experience—that is, *what* girls do and *how* they do it. Activities are girl-led, which gives girls opportunities to explore leadership roles and "learn by doing" in a cooperative-learning environment.

In Girl Scouts, girls will:

Discover: Every activity girls tackle in Girl Scouts helps them discover who they are, what they care about, and what their talents are.

Connect: Girls collaborate with and learn from other people and expand their horizons. This helps them care about and inspire others locally and globally.

Take Action: As girls connect with and show care for others, they become eager to take action to make the world a better place.

So what does this mean for your troop? Through Girl Scouting, your girls will develop a strong sense of self, demonstrate positive values, seek challenges, solve significant problems in her community, and establish healthy relationships. These aren't just good qualities—they're leadership skills that will last a lifetime!

What is the Girl Scout Program?

No matter what excites your girls, they'll find engaging and fun activities in the four areas that make up the core of the Girl Scout program:



STEM
Computer science,
engineering, robotics,
outdoor STEM,
and more



Adventure and skill
building, from the backyard
to the backcountry, including
camping experiences for all
ages



LIFE SKILLS
Civic engagement, healthy
living, global citizenship,
communication skills—to
name a few



ENTREPRENEURSHIP
The Girl Scout Cookie
Program—the largest girl-led
entrepreneurial program in the
world— teaches goal setting,
decision making, money
management, business ethics,
and people skills

Whether they complete Girl Scout Leadership Journeys, earn badges, unleash their inner entrepreneur through the Girl Scout Cookie Program, pack for their first hike, change the world through "Take Action" projects, or any combination of these activities, at Girl Scouts, every girl has countless ways to explore our four program areas and hone the skills they'll need to power a lifetime of success—whatever that looks like for them.

Explore the many exciting possibilities with the Award and Badge Explorer at www.girlscouts.org/badgeexplorer

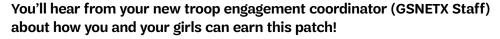
Guiding Your Troop Experience

Secrets to the

BEST TROOP YEAR EVER:

- · Hold 2-3 meetings per month
- Complete 4 badges per year
- Participate in 5 different activity types per year (community service, field trips, camping, STEM, badges, Cookie Program, patch programs) be sure to ask the girls for their input!
- Have 10-12 girls in your troop
- Enhance the experience by:
 - → getting girls to work together in groups
 - → getting girls outside
 - > engaging in community service
 - → communicating and engaging parents/families in the troop experience







Guiding Your Troop Experience

In leading a new troop, you'll want to guide the structure and experiences of your troop—from how and when meetings are held to how the troop communicates, and from steering girl-led activities to setting financial expectations. You'll make these decisions collaboratively with your volunteer team or co-leader, as well as with input from the girls and their parents/caregivers.

Use these questions to guide your conversation with troop volunteers or co-leader before discussing the topics with parents and caregivers.

Meeting logistics:

- When will we meet and for how long? How frequently should we schedule troop meetings?
- Where will we meet? Troop leader pro tip: great meeting spaces include schools, places of worship, libraries, and community centers. If working with teens, consider meeting at coffee shops, bookstores, or another place they enjoy.

Your troop:

 Will our troop consist of girls in a single grade level or facilitated as a multi-level troop with girls of many grade levels?

Troop communication:

- How often will we communicate with troop families?
- How will we keep families in the loop? The Volunteer Toolkit?
 Emails? Group texts?

Money matters:

- · Will our troop charge dues?
- How much money will we need to cover supplies and activities?
 What should our financial plan look like?
- Which components of the uniform—the tunic, sash, or vest—will troop families need to purchase? (Troop leader pro tip: get the full rundown on uniforms and insignia at girlscouts.org/ northeast-texas-council

Your Troop Volunteer Team

It takes a village to lift up the next generation of leaders; you don't have to embark on your troop leader journey alone! Set the stage for a successful troop year by tapping into the people and resources already at your fingertips.

Ways to Volunteer

Volunteer with a friend to lead a group of girls. Mentor them as they make new friends and develop connections that will last a lifetime.

Our New Leader Launch Kit includes meeting guides and activities to make your volunteer experience easy! Yours free when you attend TR100: Girl Scouts to a T - New Leader Training (see p.4)

Troop Volunteers

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate in your girl's troop experience. Your support keeps the troop running smoothly. Get involved:

- Offer to host & facilitate meetings in your home or a local venue
- Send emails or texts to keep everyone in the know
- Plan badge activities for the troop and rotate facilitating (Our tools will help you!)
- · Organize community service projects for the troop
- Create a snack calendar for troop meetings
- Chaperone outdoor adventures

Whether you can give a few hours, or an entire weekend – volunteering with Girl Scouts is flexible, fun, and rewarding.



Family Connections: The Key Ingredient to Successful Girl Scout Troops!

Girl Scouting provides the best opportunities for girls when families step up and play an active part in the troop. Without meaningful support from parents, it's difficult for a troop to be all it can be. Plus, girls feel a special sense of pride when their families take part and show interest in the things they are doing!

Kick the Year Off Right With a Parents and Caregivers Meeting

A parent and caregiver meeting should be the first meeting you hold to start each troop year—it sets up both new and returning troops for success!



Why? Because it helps:

- Families understand what Girl Scouting can do for their girl
- Families and leaders identify ways they will work as a team to support the troop
- Families and leaders agree about what the troop pays for and what families pay for individually
- You fill key troop positions—you never know which parent will make an awesome assistant leader or troop cookie manager
- Families know how the troop will communicate things like upcoming events or schedule changes
- Families learn about uniforms, books, and other important basics

Outlining clear expectations, building a team, and engaging families in the Girl Scout experience is a great way to start off on the right foot. When families are involved, leaders have support, and when the troop has a plan, girls benefit!

Check out our step-by-step guide and parent meeting outline in the Volunteer Toolkit. (Remember, you can access the Volunteer Toolkit via MyGS!) This hour-long meeting will make all the difference in the year ahead: 100% of troops with the most satisfied parents and troop leaders report they hold parent meetings. You'll also want to hold an additional family meeting ahead of cookie season to introduce parents and caregivers to the program and how they can pitch in.

Family Involvement

While Girl Scout programming is always focused on the girls themselves, it's important and helpful to open a few events to their families throughout the year. This will help parents better understand the value of Girl Scouts and be more likely to invest their time and talents with the troop.

Keep communication lines open throughout the year—whether it's through your troop's social media page, personal emails, or in-person chats—to keep parents in the loop on what the girls are doing and learning during each meeting, and encourage them to let their daughters "be the expert" at home, by, for example, explaining or teaching a new skill she's learned to the rest of the family.

Let's Go-Your First Troop Meeting!

Your first troop meeting is a great chance to get to know the girls and brainstorm all the exciting things they want to do in the year to come. If you're feeling a little nervous about leading troop meetings and experiences with your girls, that's OK! Just remember that:

It doesn't need to be perfect. Did an activity run over time? Or maybe a field trip didn't go according to plan? Take a deep breath, roll with the changes, and have fun! The girls aren't expecting perfection from you: your time, attention, and guidance are the best part of your leadership.

Learn with your girls. Keeping activities girl-led also means that at some point, the girls will want to earn a badge or complete a project in a subject unfamiliar to you. But don't let that hold you back! Be open with the girls when you don't know something and become their partner in learning more. You'll show them that learning is a lifelong process and that with an open mind, they can overcome any challenges that come their way.

Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

The only requirement for your meeting? That your girls are laughing, smiling, and having a fun time! That being said, many troop leaders use this basic structure for their meetings:

Ramp up. Plan activities for the girls on arrival at the meeting so they have something to do until the meeting begins. This could be as simple as coloring pages, journaling, or talking with one another. (5 minutes)

First meeting checklist:

- 1. Cover the basics. Review the details about when and where the meeting will take place and make sure parents/caregivers are aware.
- 2. Get ready. Use the Volunteer Toolkit to verify your troop roster and email parents. This might be a great time to ask parents to provide you with any needed items, such as health history forms, uniform order forms, and troop dues.
- 3. Know the agenda. Refer to our "Six Elements of a Troop Meeting" list and the Volunteer Toolkit sample meeting agenda.
- **4. Review and practice your agenda.**You'll feel calmer during the actual meeting and ready to make adjustments as needed.
- 5. Prepare for fun! When the girls and parents see that you're prepared for the meeting and ready to have a great time, they'll follow your lead!
- Opening. Each troop decides how to open its meetings—most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other activity designed by the girls. (5–10 minutes)
- Troop business. Collect dues and make announcements, or plan an upcoming event or trip while families are present. (5 minutes)
- Let the fun begin. Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit! Activities are already designed to fit easily into this part of your meeting as you help your troop earn badges and complete Journeys. (30–45 minutes)
- Clean up. Because Girl Scouts should always leave a place cleaner than they found it! (5 minutes)
- **Closing.** Just like the opening, each troop can decide how to close—with a song, a game, a story, or pretty much anything else! (5–10 minutes)

Keeping Girls Safe

Understanding How Many Volunteers You Need

From camping weekends to cookie booths, adult volunteers must always be present to ensure their girls have fun and stay safe, no matter their grade level. For any Girl Scout activity you always need to have at least two unrelated adults in attendance.

Not sure just how many adults you'll need for your activity? The helpful chart below breaks down the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls.

Volunteer-to-Girl Ratio Chart	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of this many girls:	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of this many girls:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8

Planning Safe Activities

When preparing for any activity with girls, check Girl Scouts' *Safety Activity Checkpoints* at gsnetx.org/safetycheckpoints for required guidelines on where to do the activity, how to include girls with varying abilities, where to find both basic and specialized gear for the activity, and the specific steps to follow on the day of the activity. *Safety Activity Checkpoints* will also note if a first-aider is required.

If a safety activity checkpoint doesn't exist for an activity you and your girls are interested in, contact activityapproval@gsnetx.org before making any definite plans.

What to Do in an Emergency

Although we all hope the worst never happens, you should know and follow our council's procedures for handling emergency incidents. Remember, at the scene of an incident, safety is your first priority. Provide care for the injured person and/or obtain medical assistance, then immediately report the emergency to GSNETX council staff at 972.349.2400. Follow the voice prompt for emergency help after hours.

Make sure a general first-aid kit is available at your meeting place and accompanies girls on any activity. You may need to provide the kit if one is not already available at your meeting location. You must always have on hand the names and telephone numbers of our council office, parents/caregivers of your girls, and emergency services such as the police, fire department, and hospital.



Great Things to Know about Troop Finances

Bank Account

All troops should establish a bank account with two unrelated adult signers for collection of optional troop dues, payment of troop supplies and activities and the cookie program.

gsnetx.org/forms "Opening or changing a Girl Scouts Bank Account and ACH Registration"

Troop Dues

Many troops decide to collect troop dues as a way to help provide start-up funding for troop activities and supplies. These could range from \$3-\$5 per meeting, to \$50-\$70 for the entire school year paid all at one time. It's completely up to each troop to decide what works best for them.

Money-earning Activities

The Cookie Program is the primary money-earning activity for a troop. If a new troop plans to participate in the Cookie Program, they may also opt to participate in a limited number of additional fundraising activities. The fall product sale (nuts, candy, magazines, online sales) is also a great way to earn money for your troop. gsnetx.org/volunteerpolicies

Financial Reporting and Receipts

To stay organized, troop leadership should use receipts to help track any incoming funds, outgoing expenses, and product sales activities. Every Girl Scout troop should report out to troop parents about finances at least three times per year. Troop end of year financial reports are submitted through Volunteer Toolkit (VTK)

Tax Exemption

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit, volunteers can utilize our tax exempt form when purchasing supplies and materials (except at the GSNETX Shop). The tax exempt form is found online at <a href="mailto:ssnetzengersen

Financial Assistance

Financial difficulties shouldn't stand in the way of a Girl Scout's participation. Any member needing financial assistance for membership can request it. Other financial assistance is available for books, badges, uniforms, and programs, and can be requested online at ssistance genetx.org/financialassistance

Funding the Fun

Your girls probably have some big ideas about what they want to do in Girl Scouts—and that's awesome! As a troop leader, you'll coach them as they learn to earn and manage troop funds. But where do you start?

Troop activities are powered in two main ways:

Troop dues: Many troops decide to collect troop dues to help provide startup funds for troop activities and supplies. These could range from a few dollars per meeting to a lump sum for the entire school year. It's completely up to each troop to decide what works best for them to support the activities they want to do.

Money-earning activities: The fall product and cookie programs are the primary money-earning activities for a troop—and they're a hands-on way for girls to learn money management skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives. You'll learn the ins-and-outs of these programs in a separate training.

We know you have more questions about troop finances, and we've got answers! Check out the troop finances portion of the Successful Leader Learning Series on gsLearn and in *Volunteer Essentials* for the details you'll need to keep troop business running smoothly.



Organizational Structure

Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA)

A national organization supporting the work of more than 100 councils across the U.S. for more than 100 years. Headquartered in New York City.

Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas (GSNETX)

Independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit chartered by GSUSA and operating under the direction of a local board of directors and overseeing all service units and troops within a specific geographic area.

Service Unit

Made up of volunteers who support the work of troop volunteers within a given geographic area.

Troops

Volunteer-supervised groups of girls.







For questions about:

New Leader Support

newtroop@gsnetx.org

Safety, Trips, and Travel

activityapproval@gsnetx.org

Training

learning@gsnetx.org

En Español

latinx@gsnetx.org or 972.349.2482

Or anything else

customercare@gsnetx.org

In case of emergency:

GSNETX council staff at 972.349.2400

follow the voice prompts for more emergency help

For my reference:

My Service Unit #
My Troop #
Service Unit Contacts

This Year in



October

Girl Scout Grand Prix Races continue

10/1: Official start of the Girl Scout year

10/11: International Day of the Girl

10/19: Raytheon Cybersecurity Event

10/31: Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

MONTHLY THEME: Celebrate Community

November

Girl Scout Grand Prix Races continue Cookie Program initial order

11/8: AT&T Stadium Sleepover and Sleep Experts

Share the Warmth Patch Program drop-off 11/15: Meteor Mania at Camp Bette Perot

MONTHLY THEME: Give Thanks, Give Back

February

Register for Summer Camp at gsnetx.org/camp

2/7: Engineering Journey overnight

2/22: World Thinking Day

2/28-3/1 National Girl Scout Cookie

Weekend

MONTHLY THEME: Engineering



March

Women's History Month

3/8: International Women's Day

3/8-14: Girl Scout Week

3/12: Girl Scouts Birthday



MONTHLY THEME: SHE-roes

June

Summer Day Camps and Resident Camps begin!

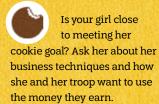
July

Summer Day Camps and Resident Camps continue!

7/4: Independence Day



Juliette Gordon Low founded Girl Scouts in 1912. You can find a painting of her in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington,







Girl Scouts

and council events you can attend as a family or with her troop.



December

#DigitalDoGooderGS free patch program

12/16: Cookie Rally campout at Camp Bette Perot 12/19: School's Out, STEM's On: Hackathon Edition

MONTHLY THEME: Digital De-STEM-ber

January

Register for G.I.R.L. 2020 in Orlando, Florida #BoothSleuthGS free patch program 1/17: Cookie Program launch

MONTHLY THEME: Get Ready for Cookies

April

Volunteer Appreciation Month National Park Week

4/4: Leadership Institute: Sampler Saturday

4/22: Girl Scout Leader's Day



MONTHLY THEME: Environmental Stewardship

Mav

National Bridging Weekend

5/1: Early bird renew your membership!

5/9: Covering the bases of STEM with the Frisco

RoughRiders

MONTHLY THEME: Arts Appreciation

August

Volunteer Kickoff and Rising Stars event

8/10: National S'mores Day

8/26: Centennial of Women's Suffrage



September

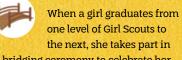
Launch Party #TackleHungerGS free patch program

9/12-13: Girl Scouts Love State Parks

MONTHLY THEME: This is Girl Scouts

MONTHLY THEME: Get Outdoors

Did you know troop leaders are volunteers? They give their time and energy to Girl Scouts just because they care. Ask your girl if there's a special way she'd like to thank her leaders for all they do. Maybe she'd like to draw a picture, send a card, or even write a song!



a bridging ceremony to celebrate her achievements and look forward to the adventures that await her.



The first recipe for s'mores appeared in a Girl Scout camping guide nearly 100 years ago! Celebrate by whipping up a few of these iconic treats at home.

Head to gsnetx.org/events to find exciting family and troop opportunities all year long. Learn more about our free patch programs at gsnetx.org/patches



NEW LEADER'S GUIDE TO SUCCESS

Council Contact Information

Where we're located and how to connect Find a Service Center near you!

JoAnn Fogg (Headquarters)

6001 Summerside Dr. Dallas, TX 75252 972.349.2416 JAFShop@gsnetx.org

Collin Area Service Center and Shop

190 E. Stacy Road, Ste 1512 Allen, TX 75002 972.912.3030 CASCShop@gsnetx.org

Denton Area Service Center and **Shop**

2317 W. University Dr., Ste 167 Denton, TX 76201 940.243.1314 DSCShop@gsnetx.org

East Texas Regional Service Center and Shop

9126 Hwy. 271 Tyler, TX 75708 903.526.2007 ETRCShop@gsnetx.org

Grayson Area Service Center

Camp Rocky Point 1243 Hanna Drive Dennison, TX 75020 903.465.5270 BBridges@gsnetx.org

and Shop

Highland Village Service Center and Shop

1850 Justin Road, Ste A Highland Village, TX 75077 972.318.1300 HVShop@gsnetx.org

Paris Regional Service Center and Shop 47 Camp Gambill Drive

Sumner, TX 75486 903.784.0803 PRSCShop@gsnetx.org

@gsnetx ® { | gsnetx.org

Southern Sector Service Center and Shop

8705 South Hampton Road Dallas, TX 75232 214.946.7075 SSSCShop@gsnetx.org



GEAR UP! THE STEM CENTER IS OPEN YEAR-ROUND FOR GIRL, TROOP AND FAMILY FUN!

FEATURING-

Archery
High and low ropes
Observation Tower

Energy in motion putt-putt course

Three Hiking Trails



Come explore 92 acres of our living laboratory!
Our hands-on activities are progressive – scaling as your girl
grows and develops her confidence in STEM.

Sample programs: Digital Movie Maker, Robotics, Eco Learner, Engineering, Coding, Astronomy, Cybersecurity, Animal Habitats, Designer, Woodworking, Outdoor Adventures and more.

Register in Ultra Camp at gsnetx.org/events 6010 Whispering Cedars Drive, Dallas

