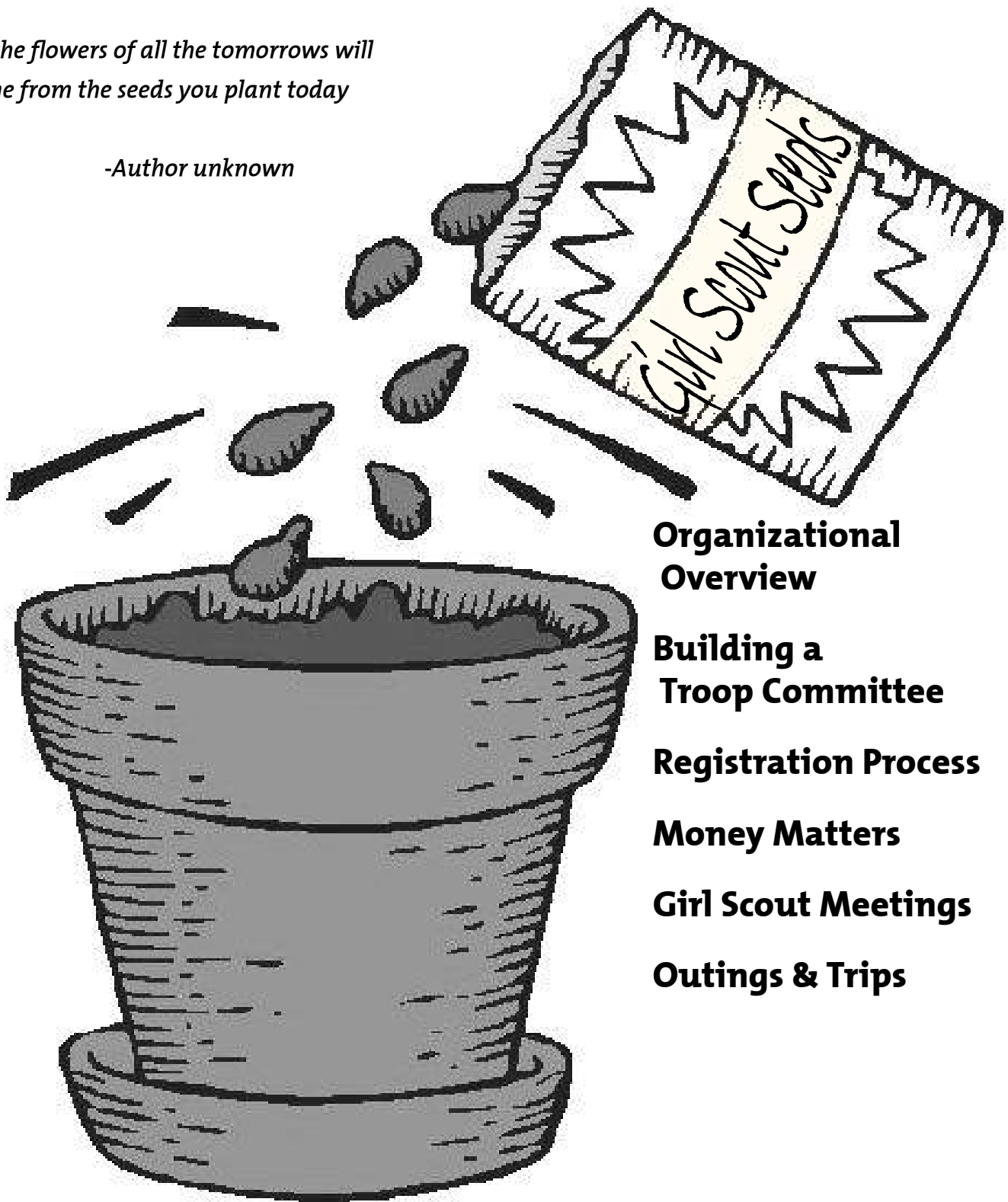


Troop Management 101

*All the flowers of all the tomorrows will
come from the seeds you plant today*

-Author unknown



**Organizational
Overview**

**Building a
Troop Committee**

Registration Process

Money Matters

Girl Scout Meetings

Outings & Trips

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TOP TEN TIPS FROM AN EXPERIENCED LEADER

10. There is more than one way of doing something. You don't need to love the great outdoors or be a life-long Girl Scout to be an effective leader.
9. Being a Girl Scout leader is not a competitive sport. If you hear of something great that another troop is doing, think of all the great things your group is doing, too, and then recreate the good idea.
8. Network. Talk to other leaders, volunteers, and people you know. Use your resources wisely!
7. Plan some joint activities with other troops. Invite some girls from older groups to come and share ideas with you.
6. Remember that all those Girl Scout rules and regulations are there to help and protect you and the girls, not to be punitive or restrictive.
5. Get the girls to be as self-sufficient as possible by building skills (especially planning and decision-making) as you go. Ultimately, this will be better for them *and* better for you, and is an investment you'll make that will pay off big!
4. Attend service unit meetings and take courses that are offered. You'll get some great ideas and meet some knowledgeable and creative people. In the long run, it'll be a time saver.
3. Don't worry if now and then a meeting sounds and looks like an amusement park fun house. Sometimes 'fun' can be a little chaotic.
2. Delegate. There are lots of tasks, large and small, and to fit every schedule. Make it clear that you are not baby-sitting. Remember to also delegate tasks to the girls—it's a gift for them to have a place to learn from mistakes in a safe environment. Let them have a part in running things from the beginning.
1. Have fun! Being a Girl Scout Leader is one of the best things you'll ever do for yourself and all of the girls. It's not brain surgery or rocket science, but it's just as worthwhile and important.



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

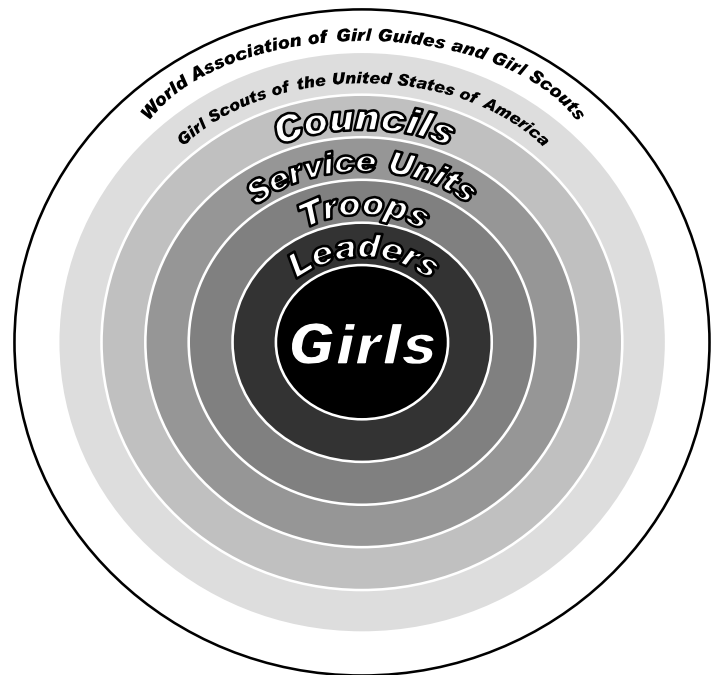
respect myself and others,

respect authority,

use resources wisely,

make the world a better place, and

be a sister to every Girl Scout.



Service Unit Name/Number

Service Unit Director

Phone #

Service Unit Registrar

Phone #

Service Unit Meeting Day, Time, Location

Membership Manager

Phone #

E-mail

Starting a Girl Scout Troop/Group

Thank you for volunteering to deliver the world's best leadership development experience for girls. Your important role as a troop/group leader will help girls develop courage, confidence and character that will empower girls to make a difference in the world around them. As girls discover, connect and take action through girl led, learn by doing and cooperative learning activities, they will experience the fun and friendship that Girl Scouts has offered for the last 97 years.

Troop leaders are appointed by and accountable to Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore. They are also accountable to girl members/families for the delivery of quality Girl Scout Program. Open and ongoing communication with family members, your Membership Manager, Service Unit Director and/or other key volunteers will improve the experience for both you and your girls. Leaders should be active members of their Service Unit and attend local leader meetings. Troop leaders must also obtain required approvals and complete reports on time.

One Step at A Time

Once you have been appointed as a troop leader:

- ✓ Find a location for your troop meetings that is convenient for you and the girls.
- ✓ Set up and hold a parent meeting
- ✓ Select a troop meeting day and time
- ✓ Recruit a Troop Committee made up of parents and caring adults who will help with the responsibilities of running the troop.
- ✓ Register by October 1 or before regular troop meetings start. Receive your troop number.
- ✓ Open a troop bank account with assistance from your Service Unit Team.
- ✓ Determine with girl and parent input, what troop dues will be.
- ✓ Complete required training within 90 days of appointment to troop leadership.

What is a Girl Scout Troop?

Safety-Wise defines a troop as at least five girls from more than one family who are supported and mentored by a Leader and Co-Leader. All new troops must have at least five girls and two non-related adults.

Recommended Troop Sizes

Girl Scout Daisy Troop (K-1)	5 – 15 girls
Girl Scout Brownie Troop (2-3)	10 – 25 girls
Girl Scout Junior Troop (4-5)	10 – 30 girls
Girl Scout Cadette/Senior/Ambassador	5 – 30 girls

A Place for Every Girl

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore is committed to finding a way for every girl who wants to be a Girl Scout to participate. One of the most important responsibilities of a troop leader is to accept new girls into the troop. New girls are able to join at any time during the year. Troop leaders are not able to pick and choose who will be included in a troop. Troop leaders are not able to exclude or remove girls from a troop. The Service Unit Team and Membership Manager are responsible for placement of girls within troops.

Troop/group membership is never to be decided by a vote of approval by girl members.

The Role of the Troop Leader

A successful troop leader will inspire girls to have fun, build lifelong friendships and develop them as effective leaders.

Troop leaders should know and use the methods for providing Girl Scouting to girls.

- ✓ Non-Formal Education – Girls participate in experiences that lead to intentional learning outcomes.
- ✓ Experiential Learning – Girls share, observe and reflect on their experiences.
- ✓ By Girls, For Girls – Girls play a critical role in the planning and implementation of activities.
- ✓ Cooperative Learning – Girls work in groups that foster trust and respect.
- ✓ Girl/Adult Partnership – Girls and adults share the responsibility and leadership of activities.
- ✓ All Girl Environment – Girls experience emotional and physical safety that creates a sense of belonging to a troop.

Girl and Adult Registration

The membership year runs from October 1 through September 30. Registration is open year-round. Membership registrations received in one of the three Council Service Centers or by a Membership Manager, on or before September 30, are considered on-time. The annual membership fee is \$10. An adult lifetime membership may be purchased for \$250. Graduating Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors may purchase a lifetime membership for \$130. On-time registration is important for several reasons. Most importantly, **only currently registered members are covered by Girl Scout Activity insurance.** Only registered members will receive valuable publications, such as the summer camp brochure and family newsletters. Adults who work with girls or who handle troop or Service Area money must be registered. Girls and adults may re-register early in the spring, or in the fall. The membership registration fee is forwarded directly to the national organization and is never refundable. Financial assistance is available to any person who wants to become a member of the Girl Scout movement but cannot afford the annual membership registration fee.

How to Register Your Troop

Registration packets are available at your Service Unit

Leader Meetings or at your nearest Service Center.

Re-registering girls and adults may have pre-printed forms. New girls and adults should use the blank forms.

If possible, hold a parent/guardian meeting and have them fill out the forms together.

Each girl's family should have the opportunity to participate in supporting the Girl Scout council financially

Have the parent/guardian write two separate checks – one for the \$10 registration dues and the other for the Family Champion Campaign. Checks should be made payable to "GSMISTS."

The Troop Leader should deposit cash registration fees into the troop bank account and write ONE check to the Girl Scout council for the registration fees. Family Partnership checks should be forwarded to the Girl Scout council individually. Do not deposit them in the troop account.

Families may also make a donation to the Family Partnership Campaign by using a Visa or MasterCard and completing the payment information on the form.

Appropriate Leader Behavior

The Girl Scout Leader's attitude and actions directly influence girls. Girl Scout Leaders need to serve as positive role models and set an example for girls.

To accomplish these goals, all leaders must:

- ◆ Take appropriate Council Training.
- ◆ Follow all Girl Scout Safety Guidelines and Program Standards.
- ◆ Take precautions necessary to avoid accidents.
- ◆ Follow local, state and federal laws and ordinances.
- ◆ Adhere to the Council Volunteer Policies.
- ◆ Nurture the concept of safety consciousness at all times, in all places.
- ◆ Refrain from smoking in front of the girls.
- ◆ Always use appropriate language and behavior.
- ◆ Demonstrate ethical money management practices with all Girl Scout funds.

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore
Position Description

TROOP LEADER/GROUP FACILITATOR
ASSISTANT TROOP LEADER/GROUP FACILITATOR

PURPOSE: Provide leadership in delivering Girl Scout program to girls.

As an adult volunteer I agree to:

- Attend a Diversity Training or Enrichment within or outside of Girl Scouting as required
- Attend or send a representative to monthly Service Unit Meetings
- Register the troop/group in a timely manner
- Meet with troop members on a bi-weekly or other agreed-upon regular basis
- Follow all national and council policies, standards, guidelines, and procedures
- Learn about and utilize the girl/adult partnership: planning, preparing and carrying out the Girl Scout program and mission
- Deliver the Girl Scout program with sensitivity towards race, creed, color, national origin, ethnicity, ability, and socio-economic backgrounds of all participants; encouraging open membership and inclusiveness
- Ensure that at least two non-related adults and at least five girls are registered with the troop
- Inform girls and families about troop, local Service Unit, and Council activities; communicating on a regular basis
- Establish and maintain troop finance records, including bank account, in accordance with council policies
- Submit Annual Troop Report with detailed cash record and copy of bank statement by the set date
- Turn over all troop records, bank account and supplies to the Service Unit Director if resignation/non-reappointment/dismissal becomes necessary
- Encourage troop family member participation in council fund raising opportunities
- Have fun – promote growth – embrace diversity

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Become an adult member of Girl Scouts of the USA
- Believe in the mission and principles of the Girl Scout movement
- Have the interest and desire to help girls
- Criminal background check approved by Volunteer Services Department and updated periodically.

TERM OF SERVICE:

One school year. Open for reappointment yearly, based on evaluation/performance review by Service Unit Director with approval of Membership Manager.

APPOINTED BY AND RESPONSIBLE TO: Service Unit Director

I have read and understand the TROOP LEADER/GROUP FACILITATOR AND ASSISTANT TROOP LEADER/GROUP FACILITATOR position description and I am willing to serve in this capacity. I understand that if I do not carry out my duties as described, I may be released from this position before my term is complete.

Name (print) _____ E-mail _____

Signature _____ Date _____ Troop # _____

REGISTRATION FORMS

GIRL REGISTRATION FORMS

ADULT REGISTRATION FORMS

Girl Registration Forms

Girl Health History Forms

Remember that the Health History form is a private document and should be viewed on a “need to know” basis only! Keep in a secure place.

Family Champion Campaign Info

Adult Registration Forms

- Not mandatory for every adult to register, however, troop/group must purchase additional insurance to cover non-members who participate in activities

Adult Volunteer Packet

1. Volunteer application
2. Criminal Background Consent Form
3. Driver Info Form

HOW TO ASK FOR FAMILY CAMPAIGN DONATIONS

One of the easiest ways to ask for a donation is to tell a story – a personal one from an adult or a girl. The formula goes like this:

1. Share – Tell an engaging story (3 minutes) Describe one of your most memorable moments in Girl Scouting & why it means so much to you.
2. Action – Make a call to action (30 seconds) “Please support our Family Campaign by making a gift at one of the listed levels...”
3. Benefit – Tell them how it is beneficial to the audience (30 seconds) “Your gift will help more girls to have this amazing experience in Girl Scouts.”

This is a four minute story with a “short and sweet” approach. No need to ramble on with the Action & Benefit. Ask and be silent! In small groups, parents who are moved by the story will sometimes feel comfortable sharing their own personal experience or even one of their daughter’s experiences, thus enforcing the value and outcomes of supporting Girl Scouting.

Remember that the \$10 registration dues goes to GSUSA—our council needs support, too. It costs about \$250 per girl to provide Girl Scouting.

CHART OF REQUIRED FORMS

	Registration	Volunteer Application	Criminal Background Consent Form	Driver Form
Adult will not attend GS activities, supervise girls, info or money	No paperwork required			
Adult will attend meetings, won't supervise girls, info or money	X			
Adult will supervise girls, info or money	X	X	X	
Adult Drivers	X	X	X	X

Check the Volunteer Resource Guide for more detailed information on adult screening requirements.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

1. Girl Forms (Parents complete and sign)
 - a. Girl Registration Forms
 - b. Family Champion Forms
 - c. Girl Health History Forms
2. Adult Registration Forms (Adults complete and sign)
3. Membership Dues Summary (Leader completes)
 - a. Enter all appropriate code/numbers on all (girl, adult and dues summary) forms.
 - i. Council code is 450
 - ii. Troop number (if taking over pre-existing troop) is _____.
 - iii. Report Code (Service Unit) is _____.
 - iv. Registration Area (Region) is _____.
- b. Tally information from girl and adult forms on to Membership Dues Summary form.
 - i. Make sure girls' school names are listed on each girl registration form and that racial/ethnic information is given (see below).
 - ii. Account for all registration and/or Family Champion money (enter on girl and dues Summary forms) collected. Checks made payable to GSMISTS.
4. Give registration materials to Service Unit Registrar stacked in order:
 - a. Membership Dues Summary/Money
 - b. Adult Registration Forms
 - c. Girl Registration Forms

			Copy to SU Registrar	Copy retained by Troop/group	Sent directly to local council office
Girl Forms	Girl Registration Forms	If racial/ethnic is not indicated on girl form, leader conducts visual survey checking appropriate selections. Indicate in green box under VS Category #1 for racial and/or VS Category #2 for ethnicity if you have marked girl's info. Leader completes code numbers in green box.	X	X	X
	Family Champion Form	Enter donation amount on Girl Membership Form if not done by parent.			X
	Girl Health History	Parents complete and sign (Leader keeps forms in secure place).		X	
Adult Forms	Adult Registration Forms	See racial/ethnic instructions above under Girl Registration and follow same procedure for adults too.	X	X	X
	Volunteer Application	Adults complete form and send directly to the council office.			X
	Screening Forms: Criminal Background Consent Form Three References	Volunteers must complete criminal background consent form and give reference forms to three non-family adult members—person filling out reference form sends it directly to the local council office.			X
	Driver Form	Volunteers who will drive girls complete this form. Troop checks dates on Driver's License and Proof of Insurance. Troop retains form and updates on an ongoing basis.		X	
Summary Forms	Membership Dues Summary	Includes information about where and how often the group will meet, and tallies registration & money	X	X	X

Hosting a Parent/Family Meeting

A successful parent/family meeting will set the tone of open communication between the troop and the families. Important decisions that will affect the troop and the girls can be made more inclusive by inviting the parents/guardians to be a part of the discussions.

Plan girl activities away from the adult portion of the meeting. Provide a supervised area with an activity, songs or games. Provide a snack. Have Girl Scout photos or handbooks.

The parent portion of the meeting should:

- Tell parents about Girl Scouting
- Explain troop start up details
- Form a troop committee
- Register girls and adults

Remember to introduce yourself and other volunteers who will be helping with the troop.

Information for Families:

- Troop meeting day, time and location. Explain meeting cancellation procedure – due to bad weather, site closing, leader emergency/illness.
- Uniform questions – (Uniforms are not required)
- Registration form and membership fee
- Share *Safety-Wise*
- Permission slip requirements
- Discuss troop finances and troop dues
- Present financial assistance information to all.
- Ask parents for a contribution to Family Champion to support the organization.
- Discuss the troop committee and ask individuals to volunteer for specific tasks.

Let families know what is expected of them:

- Encourage regular attendance at troop meetings.
- Drop off and pick up girls on time.
- Make sure girls bring/have needed items, permission forms, books, supplies, etc.
- Call the leader first if there are concerns, complaints or compliments.
- Volunteer support for the troop such as parents taking roles to make the troop successful.

Parent/Guardian Permission

A signed Parent/Guardian Permission Form is required for:

- Any event or activity different from the usual troop meeting place/time or involves transporting girls by a designated adult.
- Any product sale program or money earning activity that requires funds to be turned in to the troop.
- Activities dealing with sensitive subjects such as death and dying, disabilities, prejudice, adoption, eating disorders or other family issues.
- Releasing a girl to anyone other than parent or legal guardian.

Troop Committee

Who are members of the Troop Committee?

Parents of girls in the troop, community members who care to serve as resource people, and adults who want to be part of that troop's activities.

How is the Troop Committee formed?

By asking parents or other adults to serve in a particular role for a specific period of time.

The Troop Committee members register as adult Girl Scout members each year.

Leaders with working, active Troop Committees can spend their time planning and working with the girls because the Troop Committee:

- Helps the leaders by telephoning, arranging transportation, organizing projects, and helping at meetings.
- Makes sure activities continue when the leader cannot be present or has resigned.
- Helps recruit a new leader or co-leader when necessary.
- Oversees recordkeeping and finances for the troop.
- Promotes Girl Scouting to friends, other parents, groups and the community.
- Serves as the troop first aider
- Serves as the troop camp trained adult.
- Serves as emergency trip contact when the troop is away.
- Serves as product sales coordinator
- Helps with child care while troop leaders are at meetings or on trips with girls.

Certificates of Liability Insurance

Occasionally the agency, school or organization where a troop/group or service unit holds an activity may require a certificate of liability insurance. The request must contain: the name, address, and phone number of the place requesting the certificate; what meetings or activities are occurring at the site; and the troop number, name, address and phone number of the troop leader or volunteer in charge of the activities. Send all such requests through your Membership Manager who will forward them to the Finance Department.

Allow at least two weeks for the certificate to be mailed directly to the party that is requiring it. Likewise GSMISTS may require a certificate of liability insurance from an organization prior to entering into an agreement or signing a contract.

What Happens When Troop Leadership Changes?

New troop leadership

If new troop leadership has been appointed, turn all troop supplies, financial records, and the bank account over to the new leader. The signatures on the bank account must be changed; there is no need to close the account and open a new one.

Troop leadership vacancy

If new leadership has not been determined, turn all troop supplies, financial records, and the bank account over to the Service Unit Director or Membership Manager.

Troop merges or splits

If a troop merges with another troop, the funds and supplies of the two troops may be combined for use by all girls in the newly formed troop.

If a troop splits, troop funds will remain with the original troop.

Troop disbands

If the troop disbands, girls are encouraged to use existing money for activities prior to disbanding. The bank account should be closed and all remaining funds must be turned in to a council service center. Money may never be given to individual girls or adults. Disbanded troops are required to submit a completed Disbanded Troop Report form along with all remaining funds to a council service center.

Graduating Girl Scout Ambassador Troops

When all girl members of a troop graduate, care must be taken with the final expenditure of troop funds. All troop money is the property of the troop, not individual girls, and the troop should decide how to spend the money prior to dissolving the troop and closing the bank account. All decisions concerning the disposition of troop funds should be made by the troop, not by the leaders to "surprise the girls."

Options to consider depending on the remaining amount of troop funds:

- Purchase the discounted lifetime Girl Scout membership for each graduating senior.
- Leave a legacy to Girl Scouts by donating to a fund or program in honor of the troop.
- Take advantage of the last year of girl membership to participate in council planned activities and events.

Troop Committee Team

Adult Coverage for Meetings

- Attends all meetings with girls (or rotates with other adults)
- Must take all core leadership classes
- Plans meeting activities with girls and other adults

Troop Registrar

- Assembles registration forms from girls and adults
- Registers group with Service Unit Registrar or Council Registrar
- Registers new girls and adults during the year.

Troop Product Sales Manager(s) (Preferably one for fall sales, and one for cookie sales—also could split the job up further by having “personal sales” and “booth sales” managers)

- Attends product sales training, trains girls
- Submits orders
- Distributes the product
- Organizes booth sales
- Deposits money
- Files all necessary paperwork

Remember that girls can partner with adults, and eventually learn to take over many of these adult jobs—find ways to involve even the youngest girls in running their troop!

Treasurer

- Manages troop/group finances
- Maintains checking account
- Files simple year-end financial report

Trip Coordinator

- Responsible for transportation arrangements for trips
- Files Trip/High-Risk Activity Approval Form
- Collects permission slips
- Recruit drivers, keeps track of Driver’s License & insurance info
- Makes sure drivers have submitted the necessary paperwork

Troop First Aider

- Holds current first aid and CPR certification
- Accompanies the troop on activities when a first aider is required
- Knows how to use *Safety-Wise*
- May even help to train girls in safe ways to plan their activities

Troop Leadership Camper

- Assumes responsibility for troop camping activities
- Must take council Troop Camping Certification
- Trains girls in camping skills to prepare
- One adult trained in the council’s camping course is required to attend all troop camping trips and plan with girls

Special Interest Consultants

- Responsible for activities in a specific area such as science/technology, service projects, arts/crafts, songs, fitness/sports, etc.

Snack Coordinator

- Develops schedule for snack responsibilities
- Communicates schedule to troop families
- Has back-up snack plan in emergencies

Awards Record Keeper

- Maintains records of which awards have been earned by which girls
- Maintains records for which awards have been given out
- Purchases needed awards
- Plans and conducts Court of Awards ceremony with girls

Newsletter Editor

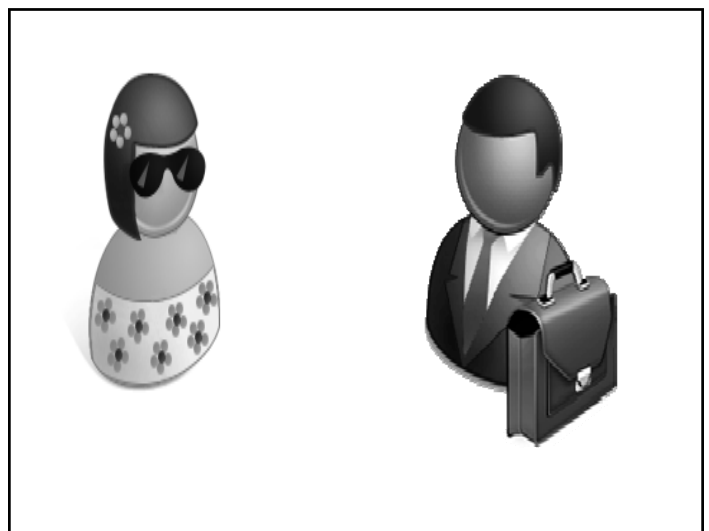
- Compiles necessary info for printed or electronic newsletter to communicate plans with families
- Possibly moderates an electronic group for troop families

Troop Drivers

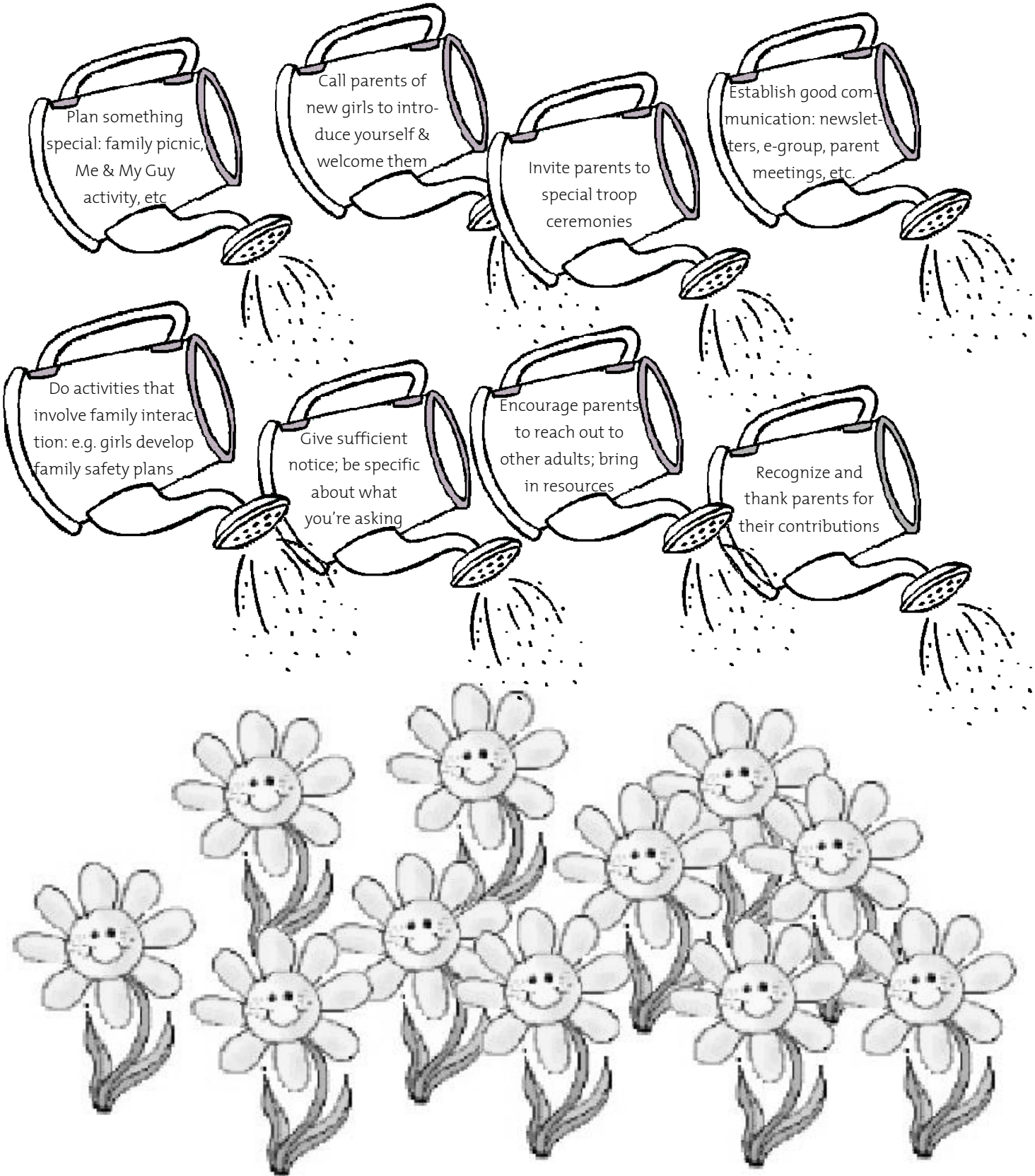
- Is available for driving on outings
- Must file required paperwork and meet safety requirements per *Safety-Wise*

Communication Coordinator

- Phones families as necessary in the event of meeting changes or last-minute announcements
- Develops phone tree for use when group is on outings



HOW TO GET AND KEEP PARENT SUPPORT



FIRST PARENT MEETING: AGENDA

1. Welcome and introductions

- All parents introduce themselves
- Icebreaker Game or Activity
- Circulate sign in sheet with contact info if not completing registration paperwork now

2. Importance of Girl Scouting

- Personal stories
- Girl Scout Mission Statement

3. Meeting Day/Time/Location

- Day(s) _____
- Time _____
- Location _____

4. Possible Troop Activities

- Parents Brainstorm Ideas:
- Service Unit events: Dates?
- Council events (*It's a Shore Thing*): Dates?
- Share Your Ideas:
- Explain that girl planning and decision-making is an important part of Girl Scouting—so all of these ideas will be discussed with the girls before finalizing the calendar

5. Finances

- Discuss approximate cost of above activities per girl
- Show catalog and discuss needed insignia, cost of any awards to be earned—discuss approximate cost per girl
- Discuss how to fund above: dues, parent donations, product sales
- Decide what amount, if any, is needed from each family (financial aid available)
- Make sure parents know that uniforms are not required—discuss where to get them if girls want them

6. Health & Safety Standards

- Show *Safety-Wise*
- Girl/Adult Ratios for meetings and trips
- Supervision and driving guidelines
- Adult Learning responsibilities
- Communication responsibilities: phone tree or mailed newsletter, timely return of permission slips, parents call if girl not attending, etc.
- Promptly picking up girls from meetings

7. Parent Help—Be Specific

- Sign up sheet or poster
- Parent Interest Survey

Specific Parent Jobs:

- Adult Coverage for meetings
- Registrar
- Treasurer
- Fall Product Sales Manager
- Cookie Sales Manager
- Other jobs:

8. Distribute/Explain Troop Paperwork

- Girl and Adult Registration Forms
- Girl Health History Forms
- Family Champion Campaign
- Driver Information Forms

9. Wrap Up

- Paperwork Deadlines
- What happens next?
- Thank everyone for coming

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Arrange time and place to meet
- Publicize meeting : How?

- If children attending, have adult helpers to carry out activities with them
- Ask parents to bring copy of car insurance certificate and Driver's License
- Research meeting locations/times
- Print agenda, any handouts
- Obtain registration materials
- Decide what kind of help you want
- Nametags

Troop Meetings

Now the fun begins! You have met with your families, completed the volunteer approval process and have scheduled Leadership Essentials. Your first meeting is the beginning of an adventure that you and your girls plan together. If you need help or ideas make sure to contact your Membership Manager or Service Unit Director.

Troop meetings usually have several sections that should be planned. Follow the steps and plan meetings that are fun and successful.

- Pre-meeting/Gathering Activity – Have a simple activity ready that girls can start to do as they arrive.
- Opening – A calling together of all the girls to begin the meeting. This should be short and could include the Girl Scout Promise and the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Sharing Time – Voluntary sharing by girls of their interests, feelings and daily activities.
- Activities – The majority of the meeting should be spent doing activities such as projects, investigations, songs, games, planning, badge work, etc.
- Snack time – A short but relaxed time together. Remember to be aware of food allergies in the group.
- Clean-up – A set time for girls to help clean up as necessary.
- Closing – Friendship Circle, song or reflection that ends the meeting.

To obtain basic supplies like glue, crayons, scissors, paper, pens, pencils, etc. – Ask families to take a look around their homes and send extras they may already have.

Divide girls into smaller groups so that supplies can be shared (one group cuts while another glues).

Have a Birthday Party for the troop and have each girl bring a gift for the troop. First Aid kit items can also be collected this way.

Decorate an ice cream bucket or a reusable grocery tote bag to send home as a reminder for the family that is scheduled to bring the snack for the next meeting.

Tag-A-Longs

Tag-a-longs are children who are not members of the Girl Scout troop and are brought along, usually with their siblings, and are present during troop meetings, events and trips. Tag-a-longs can present insurance and safety concerns.

Leaders and parents should consider the following questions before including tag-a-longs:

- Who will be available to supervise tag-a-longs?
- Can the supervision of tag-a-longs be separated from the troop activities?
- Are *Safety-Wise* standards, such as girl/adult ratios, still applied?
- Will the presence of tag-a-longs take away from the quality of the program for the girls participating in it?

Tag-a-longs are not covered by Girl Scout activity insurance. Optional insurance is available for tag-a-longs if dedicated supervision is provided.

Leaders should remember that the troop meeting is a special time for girls and having siblings present can detract from the quality of the experience for the girls.

THE BASIC GIRL SCOUT TROOP MEETING

Pre-Opening

An informal activity as the girls arrive that girls can join at any time. Examples: simple craft, drawing/coloring, games, songs. Some troops have girls collect dues and take attendance during this time.



Opening

An activity that distinctly says “the meeting has begun.” It is good to create a familiar ritual for your opening. Can include: simple flag ceremony, special song, group sharing, review of day’s kaper chart, etc.



Business

Talking, sharing and planning time. The younger the girls, the shorter this time should be. Can include: attendance, collecting dues and paperwork, talking about future events, reports, reminders.



Program Activity

The highlight of the meeting—a girl’s answer when her parents ask what she did at Girl Scouts that day. Examples: service projects, field trip, games, work on awards, preparing for outdoor activity, etc.



Snack

Optional. Should be simple. Many troops use a snack basket—sending home with girls in turn. Note any allergies girls have and what should be provided. Emphasis should be placed on healthful foods.



Clean Up

The girls share the responsibility for leaving a place cleaner than the troop found it. Girls should know that they are responsible for cleaning up and putting things away.



Closing

An activity that says the meeting is over. Again, it is good to make this a familiar ritual. Can include: retiring the flag, friendship circle and squeeze, evaluation of meeting, or special closing song such as Taps.



How your troop chooses to stack up the parts of the meeting is up to you! It is very helpful to have a set routine so that the girls know what to expect, but there’s no one right way to do it.

MEETING PLANNER

Date: _____

TIME	Mins	ACTIVITY	WHO	MATERIALS	NOTES
		PRE-OPENING			
		OPENING			
		BUSINESS • • • •			
		PROGRAM ACTIVITIES			
		CLOSING			

Refreshments: _____

Parent Help: _____

Health and Safety in Girl Scouting

The primary goal for all troop activities must be to maintain the safety and well being of all the participants. Girl Scout Program must be provided in a safe and secure environment. Troop leaders, parents or guardians of girls and the girls themselves have the responsibility to follow all safety guidelines. Each troop is given a free copy of *Safety-Wise*. The book is the property of the troop. If your troop does not have a current copy contact your Membership Manager immediately.

Always consult *Safety-Wise* when planning any troop activity and always follow *Safety-Wise* standards and activity check points to reduce the risk of injuries and accidents. The leader assumes the primary responsibility to follow and enforce all GSMISTS, GSUSA and *Safety-Wise* guidelines and policies.

Parent Permission Forms

Signed parent permission forms are required for all activities taking place outside of the regularly scheduled meeting place and timeframe, involve travel in a vehicle, or focus on sensitive, controversial topics.

Emergency Contact Person

Before any trip or activity, secure a person who will not be attending the activity. This person must be available during the entire time of the trip or activity to function as a contact point for either the parents of girls or the troop leader. The emergency contact person should have a copy of the itinerary, contact phone numbers for the destinations, vehicle license plate numbers, trip roster and all troop emergency information.

Health History

A health history is completed for each troop member every year and is the record of any allergies, health issues or other health related information.

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit must be available at the meeting place and accompanies the troop on any activity. Each kit should have at a minimum non-latex gloves and a disposable CPR mask in addition to other items as listed in *Safety-Wise*.

First Aider

Safety-Wise guidelines require that the troop leader ensure an adult with the appropriate first aid training and certification is present when required. Consult *Safety-Wise* for detailed information on when a first aider is required and the level of certification that is needed for specific activities.

Accident/Incident Report

After any accident/incident the leader must complete and submit an Accident/Incident Report Form. Complete one form for each incident or person. Please attach a copy of the permission slip. If medical attention was given attach a copy of the health history record and also complete the Mutual of Omaha claims form. Completed forms must be received at a GSMISTS Service Center within 48 hours of an accident/incident.

INSURANCE

All registered members of GSUSA are covered by basic accident insurance. This is a limited financial coverage for medical expenses of accidents occurring during approved Girl Scout activities. The GSUSA coverage is secondary to a registered member's primary coverage and only covers planned, supervised Girl Scout activities that also follow all *Safety-Wise* guidelines.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Minor Accidents

- 📁 Call parents/guardians to inform them and arrange to pick up their daughter for treatment, if necessary.
- 📄 Notify appropriate GSMISTS Service Center staff within 24 hours.
- 📄 Fill out and turn in Accident/Incident Report form.

Accidents Requiring Medical Care

- 📁 Take immediate steps to handle the injuries.
- 📄 Notify parent/guardian.
- 📄 Notify appropriate GSMISTS Service Center staff within 24 hours.
- 📄 Fill out and turn in Accident/Incident Report form.
- 📄 Complete Mutual of Omaha claims form.
- 📄 Obtain medical documentation of medical treatment to attach to the claim form. Submit completed form with documentation to a GSMISTS Service Center within 48 hours. Submit any follow-up bills as soon as they are received.

Serious Accidents or Emergencies

- 📁 Take steps to handle injuries, protect the health and safety of participants, and cooperate fully with public safety officials.
- 📄 Call the GSMISTS emergency phone at 616-204-1456
- 📄 Speak to GSMISTS staff as soon as possible so they can assist you.
- 📄 Do not make any statements to the news media or bystanders. Refer them to the GSMISTS staff.
- 📄 Do not make or sign any statements or accident reports except to a police officer or authorized medical personnel.
- 📄 Refer all questions to the GSMISTS staff member.
- 📄 Fill out and turn in the Accident/Incident Report Form.

Behavior Management Guidelines

1. At the beginning session of the troop/group, discuss rules for all girls. Make sure the reasons for the rules are known.
2. Enforce the rules consistently at all times.
3. Apply the consequences of rule breaking in a uniform and consistent manner, without anger and in a firm, caring voice.
4. Acceptable consequences of rule breaking include:
 - a. Quiet time.
 - b. Restriction from activity.
 - c. Conference with troop/leader or adult supervisor.
 - d. Conference with parents.
5. At no time is discipline to subject a girl to ridicule, threat, corporal punishment or to include depriving a girl of sleep, food, or placing her alone without supervision.
6. Emphasize the positive with each child.
7. Discipline a child individually.

Child Abuse Awareness

Each year over one million children are victims of serious neglect and abuse. Child abuse is a problem that cuts across all ethnic, social and economic groups. Prevention of child abuse is an important goal in GSUSA's commitment to safeguard the health and well-being of girls. Girl Scout leaders can play an important role in combating the problem of child abuse. Their primary role is that of a caring educator.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse means harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child. It includes physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. Child neglect means harm to a child's health or welfare which occurs through negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or medical care.

What To Do If A Child Tells You About Abuse

1. Be calm and matter of fact.
2. Don't communicate feelings of fright to the child.
3. Believe what you are hearing.
4. Communicate that it's okay for the child to talk to you about this, and that you'll find people who can help.

How To Respond If A Child Reports Sexual Abuse To You

1. Emphasize your support. Reassure the child that the abuse was not her fault and that she was right to tell you.
2. Girl Scouting's role in responding to child abuse is educational and preventive, not "crisis intervention-oriented". Particularly if a child reports sexual abuse to you, do not attempt to "interview" the child. Simply reassure her of your support and emphasize that you will do all you can to make her safe from further harm.
3. Do not predict or promise what will happen to the abuser - **(do not make promises you cannot keep)**.
4. Never, ever, to any degree blame the child for what happened.

How To Report Suspected Child Abuse

If a girl in your troop is abused, she might choose to confide in you. Please listen and report it. You may observe behaviors or injuries which cause you to believe that a child is abused. The law protects individuals who report suspected child abuse and neglect, and you have the right to remain anonymous. If, as a Girl Scout leader, you are not comfortable reporting suspected child abuse to DHS, call and report it to your Membership Manager. **Suspected child abuse is reported to the local office of the Department of Human Services- Child Abuse and Neglect Michigan Child Abuse 24 hour HELPLINE: 1-800-942-HELP**

Call and report the incident. You should make a report within 24 hours of disclosure, and/or observation. You may wish to call your Membership Manager first and decide together who will make the call.

You will be asked for some or all of the following information:

- child's name, address and phone number
- child's birth date or age
- number of children in family
- name and address of parent or guardian
- name of person with whom the child lives
- description of the abuse or neglect
- name of person you suspect is abusing the child

If the Department of Human Services is closed and the child is in immediate danger, call the local police, county sheriff or state police. Inform your Membership Manager that you have called authorities.

Within 24 hours of the incident: Provide your Membership Manager with any documentation: time of call, date, incident reported, etc. Every incident must be reported using the Accident/Incident Report Form.

Troop Finance

Each troop supports its activities through several means: troop dues, activity fees, troop sponsors, approved money earning projects, the fall product program, and the cookie program. All troop activities should be planned for, budgeted for and paid for with troop funds. Girls cannot be discriminated against based on their family's ability to pay or their level of participation in product sale programs.

GSUSA policy states "The income from group money-earning activities never becomes the property of individual members—girls or adults." (*Safety-Wise*, Program Standard #29, page 75). All money collected in the name of Girl Scouts belongs to the troop. All girls must benefit equally and fairly from troop funds. Troop money is never prorated or divided up among the troop members. All money earned by Girl Scouts must be used for Girl Scout Program activities.

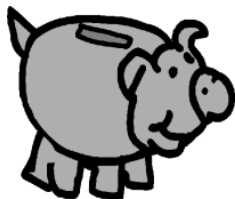
Who pays for Girl Scouting?

The family of the girl pays for:

Yearly membership dues, troop dues, uniform and insignia, transportation, resident or day camp fees, Family Champion Campaign contributions, cookie sale/fall product sale support.

The troop treasury may pay for:

Materials for troop program, supplies and equipment for basic troop operation – record books, troop flag, songbooks. Required trainings for troop adults – ie. FA, CPR, etc. Pins, patches and recognitions awarded by the troop, expenses related to outings, campouts, and trips. The troop may vote to set aside funds to pay for the registration of girls for the next year.



Budgeting

Learning about responsible decision making begins with girls deciding what they will do, where they will go, and how they will pay for it. Through planning and budgeting girls will set goals and plan how their level of participation in the Fall Product Program and the Cookie Program will help them reach their goals.

The Girl Scout program should not be expensive for girls or a financial burden for families. As girls participate in Girl Scouting, they learn to manage money wisely. One of the unique components of Girl Scouting is the importance placed on girl/adult planning and decision making. Girl Scout Troop Leaders guide girls in deciding, carrying out and evaluating program activities. The troop budget, built on dues and profits from the annual Girl Scout product programs, should cover most of the normal expenses. Estimating costs and talking with girls helps them develop valuable money management skills.



Troop Dues and Activity Fees

Together, the girls and the adult leaders decide if the troop will collect troop dues, and if so, how much they will be. Girls bring the troop dues to the meeting. This helps them learn responsibility, and helps them to see where the money comes from for their activities. Sometimes, the small amount of troop dues does not cover all of the costs involved in troop activities. In this case, troops may collect program fees for girls to participate in a council-sponsored program, or for an event in their community.

Troop dues should be kept as low as possible so girls are able to pay their share. Girls must never be excluded from Girl Scouting because they have not paid troop dues. Dues are determined based on the troop's estimated annual budget. If the amount turns out to be too high or too low, the girls should be allowed to decide to change the amount of weekly dues, if appropriate. Financial assistance is available for troop dues.

It is unwise to accumulate large amounts of troop money for future activities. Girls should receive the best program that the troop can afford each year. Be careful about saving money for activities several years away. In this mobile society, girls move or drop out continuously. If current troop program is hindered in order to save money for the future, the girls do not receive the full benefit of Girl Scouting now. On the other hand it is entirely appropriate to save some money to be used to re-register the troop members for the next year, and to carry the troop through the fall.

Girl Scout Cadette, Girl Scout Senior and Girl Scout Ambassador troops may plan extended trips which require additional money earning activities. Special permission is required for both money earning projects and the trip itself.

Parents/guardians have a right to know what happens to troop money. Set up a communication system to keep them informed. Troop finance records should be available to parents at any time. This is a good reason to keep them up to date and accurate. Parents also need to know that once money is received by the troop treasury, it no longer belongs to individual girls.

YOUR TROOP BANK ACCOUNT



Do's and Don'ts for Your Troop Checkbook

DO record every check in the register as soon as you write it, and subtract the amount from the balance so that you always have an accurate record of the balance.

DO balance the checkbook upon receiving the monthly bank statement. Keep ALL bank statements.

DO keep every receipt for every purchase.

DO write a check for every purchase, no matter how small. This will help keep accurate records.

DO make sure your deposits for the product programs equal the amount of product sold.

DO keep the girls informed of the account balance and the income and expenses. This teaches them valuable lessons in money management.

DON'T write checks out for "Cash" or to yourself, and endorsed by you. This is a big "red flag" when the accounts are monitored.

DON'T round-up your check, or write a check for more than the amount of the purchase. This is also a "red flag."

DON'T allow parents to be late with payments for the product programs. If you do not receive full payment on the due date, notify the Service Unit Product Program Manager immediately.

DON'T ever use your own personal money to pay for troop activities. All troop activities must be paid for out of troop funds.

Leader Financial Responsibilities

As a Troop Leader, Co-Leader or Assistant Leader, you are responsible for all of the financial activities of the troop. You are required to keep accurate records, file reports on time and maintain the troop checking account. Here are some tips to help you in this important role:

- ✓ Each troop must turn in a Troop Bank Account Record form each year at the time of registration.
- ✓ Make sure all adults who handle troop monies are registered Girl Scouts who have passed the background check. This includes troop product programs coordinators and any adults who take in or spend money on behalf of the troop.
- ✓ Save all receipts for all purchases. We suggest keeping them in a large manila envelope so they are available when it comes time to file the Annual Troop Financial Report.
- ✓ Save all bank statements, deposit slips and cancelled checks or the duplicate copies.
- ✓ You MUST file an Annual Troop Financial Report each year by June 1st.



Collections

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore Council will pursue the collection of delinquent accounts receivable and non-collectible checks received for goods and services rendered to GSMISTS and/or its sub-units.

Any GSMISTS operational volunteer who has outstanding debts to GSMISTS and/or its sub-units for products or services rendered, non-collectible checks, or has embezzled or misappropriated Girl Scout funds, any of which require external collection procedures, will be permanently released of all volunteer responsibilities.

Any GSMISTS operational volunteer who writes a check from their troop/group or Service Unit account, and that check is returned for non-sufficient funds or closed account, is personally responsible for all fees and charges associated with that check. Monies from the troop/group or Service Units cannot be used to satisfy the fees or charges. An operational volunteer may be removed from the troop/group or Service Unit account for writing insufficient funds checks. Other action may also be taken in regards to the volunteer's appointed position.

OPENING YOUR TROOP BANK ACCOUNT

Troop Bank Accounts

All troops are required to have their own bank account. All monies received in the name of the troop must be deposited .

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore requires each troop to have a bank account. Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore utilizes National City bank for its corporate banking needs, though troops may use the bank of their choice.

Girl Scout troop accounts are to be opened under the GSMISTS' name and tax identification number/EIN.

The following format is to be used when opening your troop account:

1st line: Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore Troop # _____
2nd line: % (troop leader's name)
3rd line: Troop leader's street address
4th line: Troop leader's city, state and zip code

The GSMISTS tax identification number (which is the same as an EIN) is:
38-1366924.

There must be a minimum of two (2) Troop Volunteer signatures and one Service Team member on the signature card. All signers must also sign a Troop Bank Account Authorization Form. Troop accounts are not to be managed by online banking due to the difficulty in maintaining internal controls.

Troop accounts are not to have debit or credit cards.

What about the dues ???

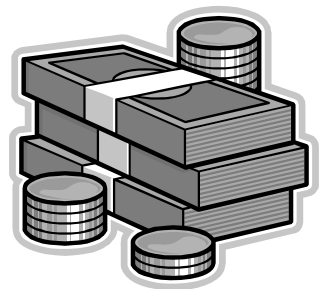
It's a great idea to have the GIRLS pay their dues.

Families often think it's easier to just give a flat amount at the beginning, However, dues offer some great benefits to the girls:

1. They can do special chores at home to earn the money.
2. They have to remember to bring the dues, and keep track of the money (good to have them practice that before they get older and have to carry larger amounts.)
3. They can take turns being treasurer—they have to collect the money and count it up to make sure it balances.
4. Handling dues is part of our Girl Scout program

5. Here's a fun idea:

Start out every meeting with clothespins marked with girls' names attached around the rim of a large can. As the girls enter, they attach their clothespin to their dues and drop it into the can. If a girl forgot her dues then she just drops the empty clothespin in the can. If a clothespin is left attached to the can that girl is absent. Marking attendance/dues is easy for the girls.



FINANCIAL REPORTING

My daughter sold 862 boxes of cookies, but I really don't know how that money was spent.



I know our group earned \$640 in cookie money this year, but I sure don't think it was spent on the troop— they didn't do that much.



Hmmm... that Girl Scout leader has a new car again this year. I wonder how she was able to afford that?!?



I can't believe that the leader spent all that money buying those flower arrangements for the Investiture ceremony.



My daughter paid her dues every week, but I bet a lot of girls didn't pay. That's not fair!



How would you feel if this was what the parents in *your* group were thinking?

Luckily, that never has to happen to you!

What is the best way to avoid having your group's finances called into question?

- A. Keep good financial records, including receipts
- B. Involve girls (and sometimes parents) in financial decision-making
- C. Report on group finances regularly to girls and families
- D. Follow *Safety-Wise* standards and *Volunteer Resource Book* guidelines
- E. All of the above!

The Annual Troop Finance Report must be filed each year by June 1st.

It's a good idea to become familiar with the form so that it will help you to organize your records.



Remember! The money belongs to the troop, and the girls should have some idea of the group's financial situation. Talk with them on a regular basis about it.

Financial Assistance Guidelines

Financial assistance is for any girl or adult volunteer who would otherwise be unable to participate in Girl Scouting. Financial assistance will be granted regardless of race, color, ethnicity, creed, national origin, religion, ability or socio-economic status.

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore is responsible for and committed to a membership which reflects the diverse population of its jurisdiction. No girl who meets the membership requirements will be denied membership in the organization or the opportunity to participate in the Girl Scout Program and activities because of economic hardship. All information submitted to request financial assistance will remain strictly confidential. Girls and adults that receive financial assistance are encouraged to participate in the GSMISTS product sale programs. **Except in extreme circumstances a portion of costs are to be paid for by the girl/family.**

Girl Scout Membership Registration Dues

Assistance will be provided to girls and adults for membership registration dues to become a member of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. A Membership Registration Assistance Form must be submitted with the Annual Registration Form to receive this assistance. A family member, troop leader or other adult in Girl Scouting can submit this form. The member's troop or family is strongly encouraged to contribute at least a portion of the amount.

Girl Scout Participation Assistance

To receive the following types of assistance a family member, troop leader or other adult in Girl Scouting must submit a Financial Assistance Request Form. This form is available from any Girl Scout Service Center and online at www.gsmists.org. A separate form must be completed for each applicant even if there are multiple requests from the same family. Each application must be completed fully and legibly. If the applicant is not a currently registered Girl Scout member, the request for assistance will be held until membership registration is confirmed. The family requesting assistance must not be on the GSMISTS bad debt list. Items and services received through financial assistance are non-refundable. Financial assistance will not underwrite event costs for an entire troop.

Although not required, partial or full reimbursement (when and if possible) of any funds granted is appreciated and accepted at any time by Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore. This enables your council to continue to provide assistance to other girls when the need arises.

Troop Program

Assistance for troop dues can be requested using the Financial Assistance Request Form. Troop leaders should plan a budget with the girls so that troop activities can be realistically funded by the troop treasury. Assistance granted for troop dues will be mailed directly to the troop leader. The total troop dues amount available per girl is \$15 per membership year. Money received for troop dues for a girl who leaves the troop should be returned to GSMISTS. **Girls must never be excluded from Girl Scout troops or activities for non-payment of troop dues.**

Uniform Components, Insignia, and Publications

Assistance can be requested for one tunic, sash or vest with insignia appropriate for a girl's grade level as well as a Girl Scout Badge Book or Journey Book. All requests must be submitted prior to purchase, no requests for refunds will be granted. The adult applicant will receive a letter that must be presented at a GSMISTS Council Shop to receive the approved items. All approved financial assistance for Girl Scout Shop items must be redeemed within 60 days/two months. The approval letter will note the expiration date of the grant. The member's troop or family must contribute a personally meaningful portion of the total cost in order for assistance to be granted.

Council Events or Activities

Assistance can be requested for partial fees to attend council sponsored events and activities. All requests for program fee assistance must be submitted with the event registration form and partial payment. The event registration form must be submitted by the event registration deadline. Council sponsored extended trips will not be totally funded by financial assistance. The member's troop or family must contribute a personally meaningful portion of the total fee in order for assistance to be granted.

Training and Training Events

Assistance can be requested for partial fees to attend adult or girl training sessions or training events. All requests for training fee assistance must be submitted with the training registration form. The training registration form must be submitted by the training registration deadline. The member's troop or family is strongly encouraged to contribute at least a portion of the amount.

Resident Camp, Day Camp, destinations

Financial assistance must be requested through the Program Department.

Money Earning – Supports Troops/Groups

Money earning projects are planned and carried out entirely by the girls and parents of a Girl Scout troop/group. “Money-Earning” involves girls.

TROOP/GROUP MONEY EARNING GUIDELINES

Money Earning Project Applications

Troop/Groups must submit an application to hold a money earning activity and receive written approval from the Service Unit Director and the Membership Manager. The activity/trip application for the activity/trip that the troop plans to spend the money on must be approved prior submission of the money-earning application.

Troops/Groups are encouraged to participate in both most recent council sponsored product sale programs (Fall Product Sale and Cookie Sale Programs) to be considered for an additional money earning project.

No money earning projects will be approved or permitted during United Way campaigns or during the council sponsored product sale programs.

Girl Scout Daisy, Girl Scout Brownie, and Girl Scout Junior troops may apply and receive permission for one money-earning project per membership year in addition to council sponsored product sale programs. Additional money-earning projects at these grade levels may not involve selling products.

Girl Scout Cadette, Girl Scout Senior and Girl Scout Ambassador troops may apply and receive permission to complete money-earning projects in order to support appropriate and planned program activities. Additional money-earning projects at these grade levels may involve selling non-commercial products. (Commercial products are “any product with a label featuring another business/ organization, or any company-branded product, business affiliation, or endorsement.”)

Money Earning Project Planning

Each girl must have written permission from a parent/guardian in order to participate in any money earning activity. The troop may create support roles for girls who do not have permission to participate in the money-earning project.

Money earning projects may not be conducted on the internet.

The troop/group must provide a budget for the proposed activity that requires additional money earning over and above council sponsored product sale programs. This budget will determine the need for additional money earning projects.

Money earning activities may not include the resale of a commercial or branded product but rather should provide a service, such as a car wash, gift wrapping, yard-raking, etc.

Troops/Groups may not solicit money by any means of raffles, bingo, games of chance, silent auctions, or events such as walk-a-thons.

Girls or adults may not collect funds for other individuals or non-profit organizations as a part of a Girl Scout activity or while in Girl Scout uniforms. This includes Relay for Life, Hunger Walk or local victims of tragedy.

Only council sponsored commercial products (Girl Scout cookies, fall products) may be sold door-to-door. “No sale or endorsement of a commercial product” includes coupon books, handing out fliers, tickets or buttons, taste testing, promotions for test driving cars, etc.

It is prohibited for a troop to receive a percentage of sales or be featured in advertising for a company or business in exchange for anything.

For any money-earning project that involves selling food to the public, is prepared on site, and/or is “potentially hazardous” (foods that have a high potential for rapid bacteria growth), the troop must contact the county health department to find out the food handling/sales regulations for the specific situation.

Ideas for Money-Earning Projects

The following is a list of several popular money-earning projects to assist your troop in planning.

- Garage sale
- Babysitting
- Recycling can drive
- Car wash
- Homemade jewelry or craft sale
- Making scarves, hats, blankets
- Raking lawns, shoveling sidewalks
- Dog walking service
- Gift wrapping

See Safety-Wise 2000, Program Standard 29, page 74 for detailed information regarding appropriate money earning projects for troops/groups.

Sponsorship of Girl Scout Troops

The girls and the support of local businesses and residents, link Girl Scouting to the community through service. The sponsorship of troops adds another dimension to this support and establishes relationships that can enhance the Girl Scout experience for girls. A sponsor can be the key to extending Girl Scouts in an area and the continuity of the troop.

TRIPS AND OUTINGS

Planning Girl Scout Trips

A very important part of Girl Scout trips is the planning process. Trips should be planned by girls with guidance from adults. Trips should have a specific purpose that the girls understand and be of a length suitable for their age and maturity. Trips should build on earlier program activities or be the opening activity for a new learning experience.

The following guidelines are in place to ensure participation, safety and purpose for all Girl Scout troop trips and must be followed.

- ✓ Inform parents that the troop is planning a trip and ensure that parents are comfortable with the location and logistics.
- ✓ A trip can be financed by troop funds if it is within the means of the troop and at least 75 percent of the girls are able to participate.
- ✓ If additional funding is needed, make sure costs are within the means of all troop families.
- ✓ Girls, with adult guidance, plan all phases of the trip.
- ✓ Make plans considering the special abilities and the religious and ethnic diversity of the participants.
- ✓ Prepare girls for the trip with relevant activities, experiences and information.
- ✓ Follow girl/adult ratio standards and activity checkpoints in *Safety-Wise and 2008 Safety-Wise updates*.
- ✓ Sufficient space is reserved so that each girl has her own bed for overnight trips.
- ✓ The entire itinerary is known to girls, adults, parents, GSMISTS, and the back-home emergency contact.
- ✓ Complete required applications, forms, trainings, and obtain appropriate insurance.

Trip leaders must carry the following documents throughout the duration of any and all trips.

- ✓ Completed and signed Health History Form or Health Exam Form (if applicable)
- ✓ Blank Mutual of Omaha Insurance/Girl Scouts of the USA claim form
- ✓ GSMISTS Emergency Procedures
- ✓ Completed and signed Parent/Guardian permission forms.

Guidelines for Adults on Overnights with Girl Scouts

If the troop trip leadership team consists of people who are related by marriage, family or partnership, a third unrelated adult must also be part of the leadership team. No adult will sleep alone with a group of Girl Scouts. In a family overnight situation, a girl may sleep alone with her parent/guardian. Adult males will sleep in a separate space from the girls.

Adults helping girls plan and organize overnight trips accept 24-hour responsibility for the girls in their care. The adults need to arrange appropriate and discreet sleeping, bathroom and shower facilities for men and women accompanying the girls.

Contracts

When planning a Girl Scout trip, you may find it necessary to enter into a formal agreement or contract regarding transportation or the use of a facility (chartering a bus, staying overnight at a museum, using a YMCA). Girl Scout volunteers do not have the authority to enter into agreements or contracts that are binding for GSMISTS. All agreements and contracts must be submitted to a Girl Scout Service Center for routing to an appropriate staff member for approval and signature. Please allow two weeks for the turnaround of any agreements or contracts. In the case of chartered vehicles, a copy of the certificate of insurance showing limit of liability is required. Consult *Safety-Wise* p. 57 for additional information regarding transportation for Girl Scout trips.

Troop Trip Driver Guidelines

The troop leader is ultimately responsible for the safety of the girls in the troop. Girls and adults must only travel in vehicles designed by the manufacturer for carrying passengers. Persons will be transported only in those parts of the vehicle specifically designed for the transport of passengers. All passengers must wear seat belts at all times. Seat belts must be used as designed, one person per seat belt. Children under age 12 should not be seated in the front seat. State regulations regarding child car seats and booster seats must be followed at all times.

The driver must ensure that the vehicle is in safe condition with good brakes and tires (including a spare tire) and that there is enough fuel. The vehicle should have a first aid kit and emergency equipment appropriate for the conditions to be encountered. Vans used to carry Girl Scouts should hold 12 passengers or less.

No volunteer may undertake a role as a Girl Scout member while under the influence of or impaired by any illegal drug or alcohol, nor use or possess it while on GSMISTS or troop business. A volunteer, using legally prescribed or over-the-counter drugs, must not accept volunteer responsibilities if her/his abilities to perform safely are compromised by that use. The use of tobacco products is not permitted in any vehicle transporting children. Drivers should pull over and put the vehicle in park before using a cell phone. Drivers must rest after two hours of driving. Limit troop trip driving to under six hours per day.

The leader should provide the driver with:

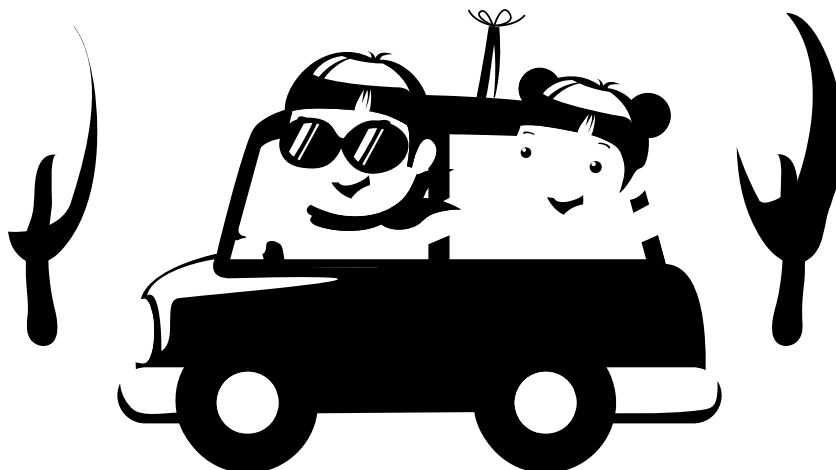
- The appropriate health history form and trip permission slip for all passengers, both girl and adult. (To be returned to the troop leader when the trip is over.)

- The phone number of the emergency contact person.

- Directions and/or map to the destination. (Caravanning or convoy-type driving should be avoided.)

- A copy of emergency procedures and the GSMISTS emergency phone number.

All troop trip drivers must register as Girl Scout members so that they are covered by Girl Scout Activity Insurance. All troop trip drivers must complete and sign a Driver Information Form/Driver's Agreement to be submitted with the Troop Trip Application.

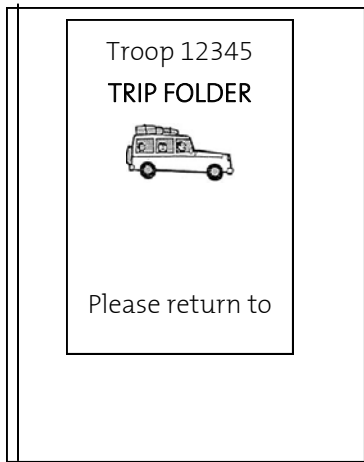


Girl Scout Troop Activity and Trip Planning Guide

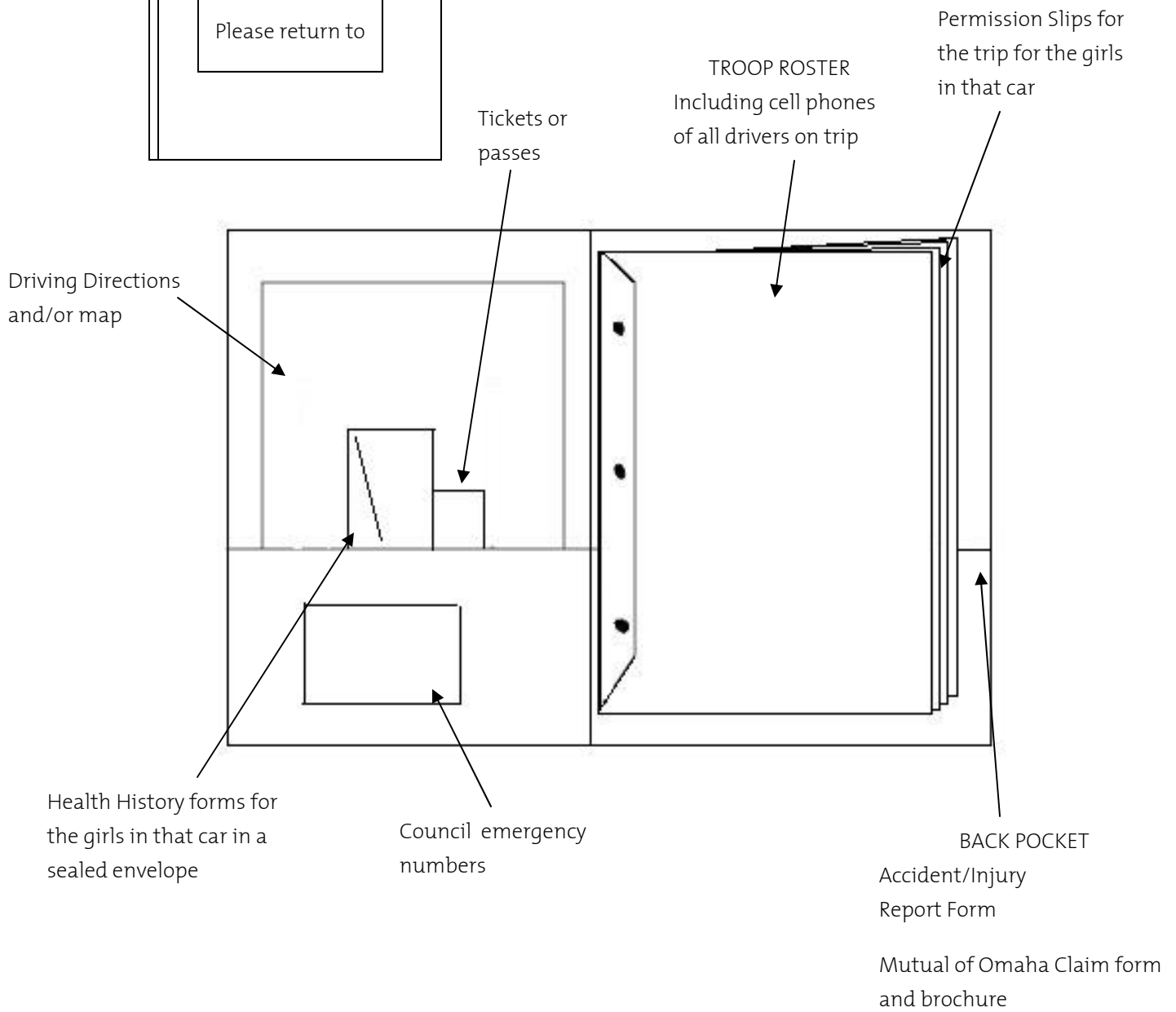
Type of Trip/Activity	Required Forms/Approval	What else is needed?
Activity during regular troop meeting time at the usual site. (Moving to a different area of the same site such as the playground or gym.)	No form required. Leave a note on the door for parents telling them where you are, when you'll return and how to find you.	First Aid Kit Girl/Adult Health History Form Girl /Adult ratio for meetings
Short Day Trip – within 60 miles of meeting place and lasting less than 6 hours. This includes walking away a short distance from the meeting place such as to the park two blocks away.	Signed Parent Permission Slip Such trips require notification and verbal approval of the Service Unit Director.	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for trips Girl/Adult Health History Form
High Adventure Activity – Swimming Water Park Horseback Riding Skiing (water/snow) Boating/Tubing	Signed Parent Permission Slip Approved Troop Trip/Activity Application Form	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for activity Girl/Adult Health History Form Lifeguard or other special instructor, if applicable.
Long Day Trip – more than 60 miles from the meeting place or lasting more than six hours.	Signed Parent Permission Slip Approved Troop Trip/Activity Application Form	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for trips Girl/Adult Health History Form Lifeguard or other special instructor, if applicable.
Simple Overnight Trips and Activities	Signed Parent Permission Slip Approved Troop Trip/Activity Application Form	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for trips Girl/Adult Health History Form Lifeguard or other special instructor, if applicable.
Troop Camping – 2 nights or less.	Signed Parent Permission Slip Approved Troop Trip/Activity Application Form	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for trips Girl Health Record Camping Trained Adult Lifeguard or other special instructor, if applicable.
Extended Overnight Trips – 3 nights or more	Signed Parent Permission Slip Approved Troop Trip/Activity Application Form Extended Trip Insurance (3+ nights) Troop Camp License (5+ nights outdoors)	Check <i>Safety-Wise</i> First Aider First Aid Kit Girl/adult ratio for trips Girl/Adult Health History Form Lifeguard or other special instructor, if applicable. Health Examination (3+ nights)
International Travel	Contact your Membership Manager	

TROOP TRIP FOLDER

REMINDER
All vehicles carrying girls should carry a first aid kit and have a trip folder like this one.



Cover of Trip Folder



Tickets or passes

TROOP ROSTER
Including cell phones
of all drivers on trip

Permission Slips for
the trip for the girls
in that car

Driving Directions
and/or map

Health History forms for
the girls in that car in a
sealed envelope

Council emergency
numbers

BACK POCKET

Accident/Injury
Report Form

Mutual of Omaha Claim form
and brochure

TAMING THE PAPERWORK: Basic Troop Forms

PAPERWORK	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	WHERE TO GET FORM	WHEN TO DO/HOW OFTEN
Registration of girls and adults	Troop Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New troops: New troop packet •Returning troops: registration packet 	YEARLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Begin (and complete) the process at the first parent meeting •Troop Registrar collects all forms and files with the Service Unit Registrar
Girls' Health Histories	Troop Leader keeps sealed copies—these should only be viewed by others when absolutely necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New troops: New troop packet •Returning troops: registration packet 	YEARLY Forms should be reviewed/updated by parents every couple of months and before any overnight trips
Volunteer Application and Consent for Screening	Each Individual adult is responsible for completing paperwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Registration packet •Council web site 	ONE TIME ONLY Troop registrar should check with service unit volunteer after 6-8 weeks to make sure they are complete
Driver Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Driver's License copy •Proof of insurance •Driver Info Form 	Trip Coordinator keeps Driver Info form and updates as necessary when individuals' cards expire	In Volunteer Screening Packet found in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Registration Packet •Council web site 	YEARLY & ONGOING Check latest insurance card and note on Driver Info Form (update as needed)
Basic Troop Records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dues Records •"Awards Earned" 	Leader or girls (as part of kapers or rotated duties)	Lots of forms are available on the council web-site	ONGOING Each troop meeting or as necessary
Product Sales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Permission to sell •Order forms, etc. •Awards records 	Troop Product Sales Manager(s) (Many troops have separate managers for fall and cookie sales)	Service Unit meetings	Sales managers will receive training within the Service Unit on the use of forms, record keeping, timelines, financial procedures, etc.
Annual Troop/ Finance Report	Troop Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Council web site •Volunteer Resource Guide 	BY JUNE 1 OF EACH YEAR Submit to the Service Unit Treasurer or person designated in the service unit
Troop Trip Folders	Trip Coordinator	Assemble and keep to update for each trip	EACH TRIP Assemble the folders, then update for each trip
Permission Forms or Annual Permission forms	Trip Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council web site •Volunteer Resource Guide 	WHEN MEETING AT A DIFFERENT TIME OR LOCATION, High-Risk, Sensitive Issues Hand out week or two before the 'trip' or activity Collect prior to (safest) or day of trip
Trip & High-Risk Activity Approval Form	Trip Coordinator	Council web site Volunteer Resource Guide	4 weeks PRIOR TO TRIP File with the person designated within service unit





































Evaluation

Your Service Unit _____ Facilitator _____

When/where you took this course _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AT THE END OF THE WORKSHOP :

Please rate your readiness for the following: (circle)

	I don't get it	Need more info	I'm ready to try it
Communicating the benefits of the Girl Scout program to group families			
Finding resources and the support you need from within the GS organization			
Explain who needs to register to other group adults			
Developing your agenda for the first parent meeting			
Deciding what kind of adult help is necessary for running the group			
Registering your group for the first time			
Asking group families to participate in the Family campaign			
Explaining the volunteer screening process to other group adults			
Establish your troop financial record-keeping system			
Open your troop bank account			
How to plan your group meetings (meeting structure)			
The trip paperwork process			

(Use the back of this form if needed)

1. What information or techniques did you learn that will you be able to use with your troop?

2. Were your expectations met during this course? If not, what would you change?

3. Did your facilitator focus on empowering you to use available resources, rather than just telling you what you needed to know?

4. I just want to say...

Your Name (Optional) _____