

The Girl Scout Promise and Law are shared by every member of Girl Scouting.

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.
**An individual may use the word or words for "God" that best reflect her own spiritual beliefs*

What program level will my daughter be?

To ensure the best experience for your daughter, Girl Scout programming is divided by grade levels. Some troops may be multi-level, with girls in more than one grade/program level making up a troop. Troop volunteers will be attentive to promoting activities that are age appropriate for all girls involved.

d Girl Scout
Daisy
grades K-1

b Girl Scout
Brownie
grades 2-3

J Girl Scout
Junior
grades 4-5

C Girl Scout
Cadette
grades 6-8

S Girl Scout
Senior
grades 9-10

a Girl Scout
Ambassador
grades 11-12

Why is Girl Scouts a Good Investment of My Daughter's Time?

Girl Scouts understands that girls have unique needs that are best met in a program designed specifically for them and delivered in an all-girl setting. In a place where she can be herself and take on new challenges. Where activities are girl-led. Where each girl learns by doing. Where learning is cooperative, not competitive. Where adults mentor girls and model skills, behaviors, relationships, and careers that girls can emulate.

National research has shown that Girl Scouts achieve higher grades, have twice as many leadership opportunities, are more likely to make sound moral decisions, and have stronger relationships with their parents.

National Girl Scout research has shown that Girl Scouting provides benefits to not only the girls involved, but their parents as well. As a Girl Scout parent you may spend more quality time with your daughter, enjoy a strengthened relationship, build lasting friendships with other adults, and develop leadership skills. Girl Scouts gives parents and girls the opportunity to be involved in an activity that benefits the community and gives them a sense of personal satisfaction by achieving a goal together.

What will my daughter do in Girl Scouts?

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a girl-led leadership program where girls discover who they are, connect with others, and take action to make the world a better place. The Girl Scout leadership experience covers many areas allowing girls to discover and try things that they may not have considered.

- **Journeys** are the core of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience that provides exploration of all three keys to leadership – discover, connect, and take action – ties directly to the 15 national leadership benefits and provides detailed guidance for adults. Journeys – their awards and badge activities – work together to create a complete program portfolio for the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- **The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting** complement Journeys with skill-building badge activities and will feature new badges on many traditional and beloved topics from nature to art to cooking and first aid, as well as new topics on girl interests.
- **Take Action Projects** – Troops usually plan a variety of take action projects to benefit their local community. This project is chosen by the girls in the girl-led environment of Girl Scouts, with grade-level appropriate guidance from adults.
- **Trips** – Many troops plan field trips, camping trips, overnight trips and even trips abroad. Older troops may retain troop proceeds over a period of several years for a great trip to Our Chalet in Switzerland or the Girl Scout Lodge in England. Trips to New York to see a Broadway play or a trip to Florida Keys to swim with the dolphins! There are as many opportunities as your daughter and her troop work to make happen!



Pathways

Girls today have many opportunities for activities. As parents, you may sometimes feel that your daughter is overloaded with school requirements, sports, family and religious activities and question whether she should be involved in Girl Scouts or any other organization.

Girls can become involved in Girl Scouting in a variety of ways; these are referred to as the Girl Scout Pathways. The pathways recognize that different girls have different personal strengths, skills, and interests, and offer flexibility for girls and parents to determine how they will participate in Girl Scouting. These pathways include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Troops:** Series of program activities with the same group of girls; typically spans the length of a school year.
- **Camp:** Day and resident camps; the essence is out-of-doors and/or includes a focus on environmental or outdoor education.
- **Events:** Girls participate in local or council-wide events; different girls participate each time.

- **Series:** Girls participate in a series of program activities with the same group of girls relating to a specific theme or purpose.
- **Travel:** Girls plan, earn money, prepare, and participate in regional, national, and international trips.
- **Virtual:** The Virtual Pathway is currently under development by GSUSA.

So you and your daughter decide which is best for her, which meets your schedule and allows her to enjoy the benefits of being involved in an all-girl organization with the mission of building girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place!

How often should I expect my daughter's troop or group to meet?

How often a troop meets depends on a variety of factors, including the availability of the meeting place and the schedules of the troop volunteers and girls. Usually troops meet for an hour or two, from once a week to once a month. Many troops meet every other week. Occasional troop activities may involve longer time commitments, such as field trips and camp outs.

How much does Girl Scouts cost?

Girl Scout membership fees are \$12 per year - that fee goes directly to Girl Scouts of the USA and does not stay with Girl Scouts of GSEIWI. Most troops also collect dues or program activity fees to support their needs. Participation in Girl Scouting should not be expensive for girls and their families, as Girl Scout troops have the opportunity to earn funds through the Girl Scout Cookie Sales and Fall Sales Program and through other money-earning projects.

I have questions about my daughter's troop. Who do I ask?

Your first step is to communicate with the troop or group volunteers. Ask the troop volunteer to meet with you when it is convenient for both of you. Ask the troop volunteer to share the goals of the troop and how these goals fit into the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Ask her to explain why certain policies and procedures were put into place. The troop volunteer is a great resource for you - she is volunteering her time to ensure that your daughter and the rest of the troop members have the opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting. If you have concerns that the troop or group leader cannot address, please contact your regional Girl Scout Leadership Center.

My daughter has a disability. Will she be allowed to join Girl Scouts?

Yes. Every girl is welcome to join Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts has a long history of adapting activities to fit girls' abilities and strengths; the founder of Girl Scouts, Juliette Gordon Low, had a severe hearing

disability. Every reasonable effort will be made to include all girls in council events and activities. The council will also work to support troop volunteers so that their troop can be inclusive of all girls.

Who is leading my daughter's troop? Will my daughter be safe?

Girl Scout troop volunteers undergo comprehensive training to enable them not only to conduct activities in a safe manner, but to make each girl feel safe and secure in the troop environment. They often have daughters of their own in their troops. They have all passed a background check and are required to follow stringent rules governing safety/supervision issues. Of course, parents are encouraged to register and participate with the troop in its activities.

Does Girl Scouts have a particular religious affiliation?

Girl Scouts does not endorse or promote any particular philosophy or religious belief. Our movement is secular and is founded on American democratic principles, one of which is freedom of religion. We welcome Girl Scouts from diverse backgrounds. In the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting, girls will have the opportunity to earn the My Promise, My Faith pin. This helps them explore how girl scouting and their faith offer similar ideas about how to act. Girls also have the opportunity to participate in the Religious Awards Programs. These are dynamic programs that enable adults in their ministry to connect with youth.

How can I get financial assistance?

No girl is denied membership because of inability to pay; financial assistance is available to ensure that every girl is able to participate. Approximately, one-fourth of girls in Girl Scouting receive financial assistance. To request financial assistance, please contact your regional Girl Scout Leadership Center.

Does my daughter have to wear a uniform?

Uniforms are not required; we recommend that girls have a sash or a vest to display their awards and badges. Troops may decide which pieces of the uniform they wish to use or make their own t-shirts for group trips/events; others may allow each individual girl to decide which type of uniform to wear. Check with your troop volunteer before you go shopping. You may shop the Girl Scout Shop online at www.GirlScoutsToday.com or at any of the six regional locations.

Can one person run a troop?

No! even with just a few girls, there must be a minimum of two troop volunteers, one of whom must be a female. And each leader must have a support team of assistant/co-leaders and involved family members. When enough people pitch in to help, the pressure is taken off the leader, and your daughter receives a better program.

The GSLE

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a girl-led leadership program where girls discover who they are, connect with others, and take action to make the world a better place.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is intentionally designed to tie to one or more of the 15 national leadership benefits categorized under the three keys to leadership.

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience provides three processes for adults partnering with girls to incorporate: Girl Led, Cooperative Learning, and Learning by Doing.

The Three Keys to Leadership

Discover: Girls understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world.

Connect: Girls care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.

Take Action: Girls act to make the world a better place.

15 benefits of the GSLE:

Discover

1. Girls develop a strong sense of self
2. Girls develop positive values
3. Girls gain practical life skills
4. Girls seek challenges in the world
5. Girls develop critical thinking

Connect

1. Girls develop healthy relationships
2. Girls promote cooperation and team building
3. Girls can resolve conflicts
4. Girls advance diversity in a multicultural world
5. Girls feel connected in their communities, locally and globally

Take Action

1. Girls can identify community needs
2. Girls are resourceful problem solvers
3. Girls advocate for themselves and others, locally and globally
4. Girls educate and inspire others to act
5. Girls feel empowered to make a difference in their world

Your daughter's responsibility to her troop

- Attend and participate in meetings and outings
- Fulfill obligation of dues and know that permission slips are signed by a parent or guardian
- Complete any missed activities
- Pass along important information to parents or leaders
- Treat each member of the troop as a sister.
- Listen to others in the troop and show respect for what they are saying
- Respect troop volunteers and troop parents
- Conduct herself in a safe manner
- To have FUN!

positive manner

- Consider volunteering with the Fall Sales Program, the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program, to chaperone events or serve on a troop committee
- If issues arise, please discuss this privately with the troop volunteer, not in front of the girls
- Help the troop volunteers establish and maintain a positive environment in the troop by talking with your daughter in a positive manner and setting a good example
- Let your daughter know that you consider her participation in Girl Scouting to be important and special
- Attend parent meetings, group activities and special ceremonies
- Consider making a tax-deductible contribution to GSEIWI to support the programs for the girls

Parent's Responsibility to the Troop

- Please see that your daughter arrives and is picked up on time for all meetings and outings
- Help your daughter fulfill her troop responsibilities (dues, permission slips, snack, uniforms, etc.)
- Be supportive of your daughter in her Girl Scout endeavors; help her complete any missed activities
- Please notify troop volunteers ahead of time if your daughter will not be able to attend a meeting/activity
- Check with the troop volunteer for any important news or paperwork that needs to be completed
- Assist the troop volunteers during meetings/activities as needed
- Give feedback to the troop volunteers about your daughter's experience in a

Troop Information

Troop Leader: _____

Telephone: _____

Troop Co-Leader: _____

Telephone: _____

Troop #: _____

Meeting Day: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Support Your Girl Scout

Volunteers are the Lifeblood of Girl Scouting

Our volunteers make a difference ... in the lives of girls, in the success of families and in the growth of communities. The strength of Girl Scouting rests on the shoulders of adult volunteers who are committed to helping all girls develop into strong, confident, capable women.

As a parent or guardian, what can I do to help?

Please support your Girl Scout's troop and encourage her participation in activities, to enable her to enjoy her Girl Scout experience. Girl Scouts is a team effort among leaders, girls and parents.

Roles to make a troop successful:

- Assistant Leader
- Troop Fall Product Manager (responsible for the Fall Sale Program)

- Cookie Troop Manager (responsible for the Cookie Sale)
- Troop Treasurer (responsible for financial affairs)
- Service Project Coordinator (coordinate service projects)
- Outdoor Program Coordinator (coordinate camp outings)
- Transportation (coordinate who will drive on field trips)
- Refreshments (bring snacks to meetings)
- Telephone Coordinator (coordinate calling the girls if necessary)
- Troop Shopper (shop for troop supplies as needed)
- Craft Coordinator (plans crafts and activities)
- Special events (arrange trips and other events)
- Paperwork (keep all troop records, including registration and individual girl records)

- Recognitions (check girls on work toward try-its, badges, etc., arrange help when needed, keep record keeper informed)
- Emergency contact (available for volunteers and parents to contact in case of an emergency while the troop is on a field trip)

Remember, In The End ... It is ALL ABOUT THE GIRL!

Girl Scouting is built around a unique concept emphasizing that girls should have a say and be extensively involved in their Girl Scout experiences. Girls and adults work together to make sure that the girls are getting the experience they expect. In Girl Scouting, the focus is always on the girl and giving her the opportunity to develop leadership and build courage, confidence, and character.

About Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois is the premier leadership development organization for girls, serving over 18,000 girls with almost 5,000 adult members in 38 counties in Iowa and Illinois. For more information on how to join, volunteer or donate to Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois, call 800-798-0833, or visit www.GirlScoutsToday.com. For information on the national organization, visit Girl Scouts of the USA's Web site at www.GirlScouts.org.

The VINE : Sign Up Now to Stay Informed!

Do you receive The VINE: Very Important News and Events from GSEIWI? The VINE

contains the most up-to-date information on program events, training, product sales, camp, and much more. It's a great way as a parent to keep up-to-date on what's going on beyond your daughter's troop!

By signing up for E-News, you will receive on-going information that is pertinent to your selected areas of interest in a timely fashion! Visit www.GirlScoutsToday.com to sign up.

Family Partnership Appeal

Financial support comes from corporate donors and grants but most importantly financial support comes from our Girl Scout families. Funding provides activity scholarships for girls who need financial assistance, leadership building experiences for all members, volunteer development programs, and maintenance of outdoor

program facilities. It is our council mission is to ensure every girl has the opportunity to join Girl Scouts and when she does, exceed her expectations. GSEIWI also strives to provide the resources necessary for our families to lead the girls through their Girl Scout journey. The continued support of our donors will allow Girl Scouts to be the premiere leadership program for girls in our communities for the next 100 years. To make your donation:

- Call 800-798-0833 to make a secure credit card donation by phone.
- Mail a check made payable to GSEIWI to:
Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and
Western Illinois
2011 Second Avenue
Rock Island, IL 61201.

Burlington

1308 Broadway Street
P.O. Box 190
West Burlington, IA 45415
T: (319) 752-3639
(800) 798-0833
F: (319) 753-1410

Cedar Rapids

317 Seventh Avenue SE, Suite 201
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
T: (319) 363-8335
(800) 798-0833
F: (319) 363-1620

Decorah

801 Commerce Drive
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(800) 798-0833
F: (563) 387-3802

Dubuque

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T: (563) 583-9169
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F: (563) 588-3630

Quad Cities

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T: (319) 232-6601
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