

GSWCF

Troop Travel Guide



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of west central florida

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Training & Certification Requirements for Trips

Required Troop Leader Training must be completed prior to any trips. Refer to the Adult Learning page on the GSWCF website for all specifications and requirements:

<https://www.gswcf.org/en/volunteers/adult-training.html>

Type of Trip	Required Training
All Trips	Traveling Troops Let's Work Together Let's Get Organized Let's Be Girl-Led First Aid & CPR/AED
Trips that include outdoor skills and cabin camping	GSUSA Girl Scouts in the Outdoors Basic Outdoor Leadership Training (BOLT)
Trips that include tent camping	GSUSA Girl Scouts in the Outdoors Basic Outdoor Leadership Training (BOLT) Advance Camp Training (ACT)
Trips that include primitive camping/hiking	GSUSA Girl Scouts in the Outdoors Basic Outdoor Leadership Training (BOLT) Advanced Camp Training (ACT) Wilderness Camping / Wilderness First Aid & CPR
Trips with swimming activities	Lifeguard Council Approval

Trainings do not all have to be a Troop Leader as long as someone in an adult role has the certifications.

What is a trip?

A trip is defined in Volunteer Essentials as any activity outside of your regular troop meeting time and/or place. All trips require the leader to obtain permission slips and health history forms from parents.

Safety Activity Checkpoints: Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) is a resource that provides safety standards and guidelines for Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA)–approved activities. GSWCF may have restrictions beyond GSUSA. Please refer to the website as you make your trip plans. <https://www.gswcf.org/en/our-council/forms-and-documents.html>

Understanding which activities are not allowed: In an exciting, learning-by-doing environment like Girl Scouting, it's only natural that girls will sometimes want to take part in activities not covered in Safety Activity Checkpoints. Safety Activity Checkpoints is your go-to source for permissible activities.

Forms: The type of activity will determine the form(s) required and deadline for submission. A complete list of forms frequently used in trip and overnight planning can be found in the [Resources & Forms](#) section of this guide.

UNIT 1: Progression

Progression is an important aspect of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. As a Girl Scout leader, you should plan to integrate progression into your troop year.

Progression in Girl Scouts is the continuing development of girls and adults. As you plan your troop year with your girls, you should build on skills already learned, and progress toward further development of those skills. The goal of progression is to ensure that each girl is ready for the group activity, and that the girls gradually develop the skills and self-confidence needed to complete the activity. A gradual development of skills will build confidence and self-esteem in the girls. When done properly, the girls will have increased abilities to plan their year with you as represented in the chart below.

Progression of Planning by Grade Level

Girl Scout Daisy—Present two or three ideas in the Daisy circle and vote on one to do.

Girl Scout Brownie—Discuss activities they want to do, narrow down the list, and vote on one. Then ask girls for suggestions on where they can do that activity.

Girl Scout Junior—Decide where to go and what to do. Plan portions of the trip in patrols. Leaders advise as needed to help girls keep ideas realistic and age appropriate.

Girl Scout Cadette—Participate in extended trips, where almost all of the planning is done by the girls. Start combining experiences like camping with exploration and travel. Begin to share experiences with others.

Girl Scout Senior and Ambassador—Participate in extensive travel opportunities where all the planning is done by the girls. Share experiences and expertise with younger or in-experienced groups.

Girl Scout Travel Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent travelers, including how to plan and organize trips. Because when girls take the lead, the possibilities are endless.

OVERNIGHTS

Start with one night, maybe at a camp or museum. Progress to a weekend trip in a nearby city or state park.

Keep it girl-led: girls plan the activity and meals, create travel games, and pack their own overnight bags.

DAY TRIPS

Take an all-day trip!

Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location and activity (perhaps working toward a badge) and make plans for lunch.

LOCAL FIELD TRIPS

Get your travel feet wet! Walk to a nearby garden, or take a short ride to a firehouse or other local spot.

Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location.

REGIONAL TRIPS

Spend three to four nights away somewhere a few hours from home.

Keep it girl-led: girls plan key details of the trip, such as the activities, the budget, the route, and lodging.

(Extended trip insurance required.) insurance required.)

NATIONAL TRIPS

Travel the country: Trips often last a week or more. Girls should think beyond a typical vacation location and consider historical sites, museums, or national parks!

Keep it girl-led: girls lead the entire planning process and might add a community service or Take Action project. (Extended trip insurance required.)

INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

Travel the world! These life-changing trips usually take one to three years to prepare.

Consider visiting a WAGGGS World Centre!

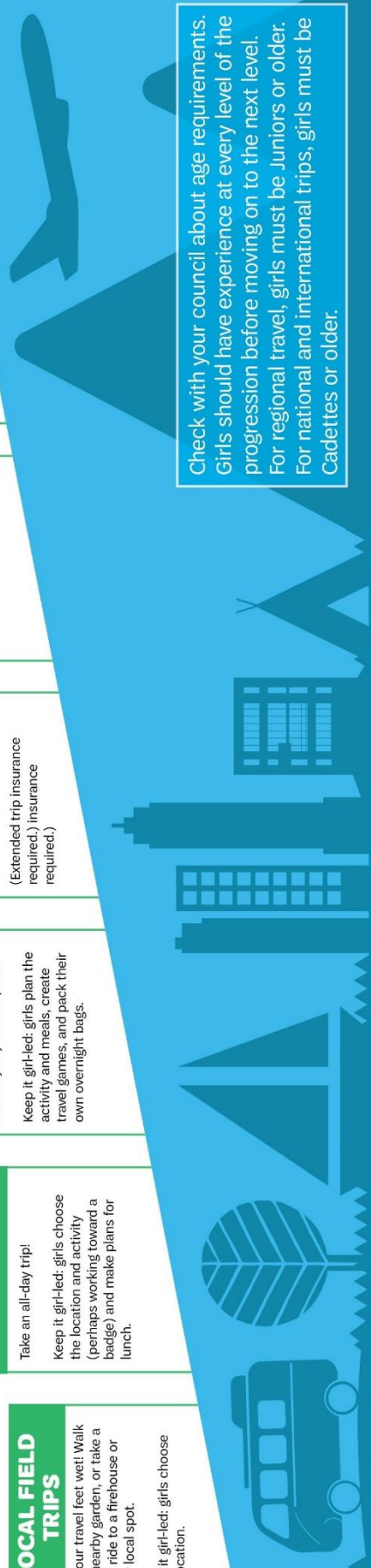
Keep it girl-led: girls download the Global Travel Toolkit and plan their entire trip (including learning about the language, culture, passports and visas, exchange rates, etc.). (Extended trip insurance required.)

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Older girls with national or international travel experience can travel nationally or internationally independently through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program. Check with your council, or visit the Girl Scout Destinations website!

Check with your council about age requirements. Girls should have experience at every level of the progression before moving on to the next level. For regional travel, girls must be Juniors or older. For national and international trips, girls must be Cadettes or older.

When moving up to each level of the progression, consider girls' independence, flexibility, decision-making skills, group skills, and cross-cultural skills.

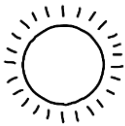


Progression of Trips

Here are some recommended examples of progression while planning trips, from Girl Scouting's Ladder of Leadership:



Meeting Time Trips (Daisies and older)—Travel to points of interest in your troop's neighborhood. Examples include a walk to a nearby park, or short ride by car to a fire station or courthouse.



Day Trips (Brownies and older)—Go on daytime excursions away from the group's meeting place and outside their regular meeting time. This could be an all-day trip to a point of historical or natural interest where they bring their own lunch or a trip to a neighboring city where they make plans for a meal in a restaurant.



Simple Overnight Trips (Brownies and older)—Spend one to three nights away. The destination may be a nearby state park, historical site, or city for sightseeing. The group stays in a hostel, hotel, motel, or campground. For younger girls (Brownies), the trip could include family members like a Mom and Me overnight.



Extended Overnight Trips (Juniors and older)—Spend five or more nights away. Trips range from a week at camp to extended travel in the continental United States. The group might use several accommodations and modes of transportation throughout the trip.



National Trips (Cadettes and older) - Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component.



Destination Trips (Cadettes and older)—Travel individually through GSUSA sanctioned events with many trip options that take place at the state, national or international level.



International Trips (Seniors and older)—Experience travelling outside the country. This type of trip is most successful with girls who are 14 years or older and have successfully completed extended overnight trips. These trips are subject to special requirements including regulations and procedures from the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). For more information on international travel, please see pages 10 and 22 (Resources section) of this manual.

Is Your Troop Ready for an Overnight Trip?

Girls will enjoy their trip experiences best if they have previous experiences to prepare them. Taking a group of girls on a trip with no preparation is likely to lead to frustration and confusion on the part of both girls and adults. The experience of each girl and how ready she is for an overnight experience away from family and familiar surroundings will greatly affect how she feels and how enjoyable the experience will be for her. Readiness in girls is checking where they are when it comes to their emotions, physical ability and skills for living away from a parent/guardian.

Review the chart below. In the right hand column, write down some actions you and the other adults supporting the troop can take to help girls become ready for an overnight troop trip experience.

Types of Readiness	Readiness Indicators	What actions can be taken to prepare the girls based on the checked items?
Emotional Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid to be away from home overnight <input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid to be away from parents/guardians overnight <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians are prepared to let their daughter go <input type="checkbox"/> Wants to go <input type="checkbox"/> Is willing to sleep, eat, and play with all girls, not just close friends <input type="checkbox"/> Can cope with unknowns, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strange places (including outdoor bathrooms) <input type="checkbox"/> Darkness <input type="checkbox"/> Woods and night noises <input type="checkbox"/> Spiders, bugs, worms <input type="checkbox"/> Can manage with little or no privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't always have to have her own way <input type="checkbox"/> Can function as a member of a group 	
Physical Readiness <i>(Adjustments should be made for physical needs and differences of girls.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has stamina, does not tire easily <input type="checkbox"/> Strong enough to carry own gear, bedroll/sleeping bag <input type="checkbox"/> Has coordination for planned activities and jobs (sleeping, hiking, sweeping, mopping, moving chairs and tables, etc.) 	
Skills and Knowledge for Age-Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Can plan simple activities <input type="checkbox"/> Can read a recipe and help with cooking <input type="checkbox"/> Can follow a kaper chart <input type="checkbox"/> Can use kitchen implements <input type="checkbox"/> Can wash and disinfect dishes <input type="checkbox"/> Can clean up the kitchen and cooking area <input type="checkbox"/> Is able to store food properly <input type="checkbox"/> Can make up her bed <input type="checkbox"/> Can clean a toilet <input type="checkbox"/> Can use a flashlight 	
Proven Ability and Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Has previously followed instructions satisfactorily <input type="checkbox"/> Has previously been on day trips without difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Has demonstrated the ability to pack and repack personal gear, sleeping bag or bedroll 	

Six Steps to Planning a Trip or Overnight Experience

Being Girl Led is one way that Girl Scouting is unique from other organizations. In Girl Scouts, the girls take the lead. They are involved in all aspects of planning, implementing and evaluating their experiences. The adults guide the girls for a successful experience. Below you will find six steps to planning with girls for a day or overnight trip experience.

STEPS	Description
1. Think ahead.	Check out the badges and journeys on the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) according to the interests of the girls in your troop. Look in <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> for information on council policies and safety standards. Consider facilities, time of year, cost, and purpose for the trip, and the girls' experience level.
2. Get ideas from the girls.	Share some of your research from Step 1 with the girls. Have the girls look through their Girl Scout Badges, Journey books and handbook for other ideas. Involve them in the planning by asking them some questions. Where do they want to go? What do they want to do?
3. Sift through ideas, decide on a trip and create your plan with the girls.	Prioritize, decide, and come up with a plan for the trip. Assign different planning responsibilities to different girls—meals, activities, permission forms and transportation, etc. Always have a back-up plan; for example, in case weather forces one activity to be cancelled.
4. Inform parents, other adults and the Service Unit/GSWCF.	Communicate with parents and other adults working with the troop. Be specific in enlisting support—drivers, grocery shoppers, etc. Distribute necessary paperwork, such as Permission Slips, High-Risk Activity Forms, etc. Depending on the length of the trip, submit the appropriate Troop Travel and/or High Risk Activity Application online.
5. Implement and discuss.	Gather your adults, girls, supplies, drivers, and go. Help girls to see the advantages of their pre-planning as the trip progresses.
6. Evaluate during and after the experience.	Review the experience as it is happening. During the activity, ask the girls open-ended questions about what they see, how they feel, what they like so far and so on. At the next meeting, continue to review by asking questions designed to make girls think.

Sample Planning Calendar

Meeting	Meeting Content/Discussion with Girls	Leader Activities*
1	<p>Discuss the trip with girls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explain what a troop trip is. ○ Have girls brainstorm where they would like to go and discuss location options ○ Discuss types of activities available ○ Discuss what it may cost to go on a trip. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research the location options. ○ If girls make a decision on where they would like to go, make the site reservations. ○ Begin communication with parents regarding the upcoming trip.
2	<p>Discuss the menu with girls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What would the girls like to eat? Are they experienced with cooking? What would be appropriate? Do you have to consider food allergies? ○ Brainstorm meal ideas and begin to create a menu and a shopping list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find out from parents and Health History forms if girls have food allergies. ○ Begin to <u>recruit for adult support</u> to help with shopping for supplies (with the girls), drivers, chaperones, etc.
3	<p>Discuss activities that the girls want to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Begin to make a list of activities and supplies needed. Discuss with girls how they will collect/purchase any supplies. ○ Begin to plan the schedule for the trip. ○ Learn a fun song or Girl Scout grace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Add to your shopping list and to the budget any supplies needed for activities. ○ Confirm with parents when shopping will take place.
4	<p>Work on skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss trip safety and the buddy system. Randomly pick buddies for each Girl Scout. ○ Practice simple first-aid (if age appropriate). ○ Send permission slips home with the girls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that a certified First-Aid & CPR adult and First-Aid kit is lined up for the trip. ○ Plan the shopping list ○ Begin to put your equipment together.
5	<p>Discuss expectation and behavior for the trip.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create behavior guidelines for the trip experience. ○ Implement a game or have the girls identify items to pack and not to pack. ○ Begin to gather permission slips. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a poster with the guidelines the girls created. ○ Give the girls a list of what to pack and not to pack.
6	<p>Discuss kapers (chores) and have the girls create their kaper chart.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the trip agenda with everyone. ○ Collect permission slips. ○ Answer any questions the girls may have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm with all adults and ensure background check and registration are complete. ○ Ensure you have all forms ○ Ensure you have everything needed for what girls planned.

*Seniors and Ambassadors are able to do many of these Leader Activities.

Extended Trips and International Travel

Extended trips (3 or more nights) and International travel are considered the ultimate travel experience for girls. Travelling internationally can be a wonderful opportunity for girls to gain cultural insight, an appreciation for differences and similarities, and a broadened perspective. As girls mature in Girl Scouts, many consider travel one of the most exciting aspects of their membership.

Because of the riskier nature of these big trips, there are additional considerations that you will need to account for when planning and preparing to leave. This page will give you a basic checklist of information to help you and your girls properly prepare for an extended trip or traveling out of the country. You can find all the detailed information you need in these resources found at <http://www.girlscouts.org/travel>:

1. [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#)
2. [Girl Scout Global Travel Toolkit](#)

All extended and international trips must be approved by your service unit and council. Please contact them as soon as you know you'll be taking a trip. Your support staff will provide you with the additional policies and forms necessary for your trip. Planning for an international trip with your troop should take 18-24 months.

International Travel Guidelines:

- All travelers must be registered Girl Scouts (both girls and adults). There should be a minimum of two registered and background checked adults traveling. Always check the Girl/Adult Ratios chart.
- Activities done abroad should be done as a group. Girls should not participate in any activity without the supervision of the travelling adults.

Submit Required Forms	Due before trip
Extended Overnight Troop Travel Application	6 weeks - domestic 3 months - international
Intent to Travel Form (To GSUSA- Girl Scout Travel Appendix)	3-6 months
Additional Tasks	Due before trip
Obtain passports	12 months
Obtain Traveler's insurance	4-6 weeks
Purchase Accident and Sickness Insurance from GSWCF	2-6 weeks
Register your trip with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate of the country you will visit	4 months
Provide all girls with emergency contact card (In Volunteer Essentials)	Before departure
Collect from girls/families	
Signed parent/guardian permission slips	
Copies of passports for all travelers (girls and adults)	
Girl and adult health forms (reviewed by first aider)	
Permission to Travel with Minors form	
Parental Permission to Travel in Mexico (as needed - examples can be found online)	

Evaluating with Girls

Asking Good Questions:

A key process in implementing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is experiential learning or learning by doing. The trip experience is a perfect environment where girls learn by doing. Asking good questions before, during and after the trip will help you, your girls, and other adults learn from the experience. It teaches girls to be inquisitive and question their own experiences. This will help the girls create meaning and apply it to future experiences. Here are some questions to ask:



During the Trip

As you implement the trip with girls, take some time to ask the girls questions throughout the experience. What does this look like? Here are some suggestions on how to engage the girls in evaluating their experience without them even knowing it is happening.

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down— This is a quick and easy way to gauge how the girls feel about the experience. After they have their first meal and they are waiting to start the next activity ask, “How do you think breakfast went? Did we work well together? Thumbs up for yes, Thumbs down for no.” Then ask probing questions based on how the girls rated the experience, “Sally, why do you have a Thumbs down?”

On a Scale of 1 to 10 — This is another quick and easy way to get the girls evaluating and talking about their experience on their trip. When doing a sit down activity or waiting for the next step to begin, ask the girls to rate from 1-5, 1-10 or 1-100 (you can create the scale) what they think about their lodge camp experience. Tell them 1 = “yuck, the worst experience of my life” and 10 = “this is great, the best experience ever.” You can choose the words for the scale. As they give you a number, ask them to explain why.

Name One Thing — As you are wrapping up your first day of your experience or an activity, ask these three questions: “Name one thing you liked about today (or the activity). Name one thing you did not like. Name one thing you would change.” As the girls discuss their one thing, ask them to explain why they liked it or why they would change it.

After the Trip

The trip is over! The girls and adults had fun. It’s now time to formally evaluate the experience and see how the girls feel about the trip and what they can do to improve the planning and experience the next time.

There are multiple ways to evaluate with the girls. Write down what you hear from them, put it with the paperwork from the trip and pull it out when they are ready to plan another adventure. Here are some ideas to evaluate with girls:

Evaluation Tools

Evaluation takes many forms. As your girls grow, your techniques for evaluation will evolve as well. You will get to know the girls in your troop better and be able to judge which techniques encourage them to share the most.

Bull’s Eye

Draw a large bull’s eye on a piece of newsprint. Have the girls use stickers to gage their feelings about being “on target” or “way off.” For example: Use your bull’s eye as a way to see how the girls feel about their success with the planning trip.

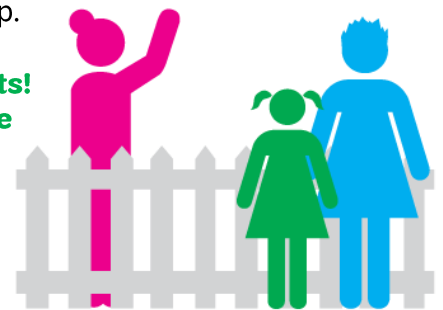
Mural

Place a large sheet of butcher paper on the wall or on a long table. Ask the girls an open-ended question. For example: “Since we have been planning a trip to MOSI, what have we learned about planning a trip? Supply paints and markers and have the girls draw pictures and write in response to the question. This activity can be done on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, etc.).

Collage/Picture

Have each girl cut out magazine pictures or draw something in response to a question. This tool works best with a before or after question. For example: Have the girls find or draw a picture about how they felt before they had to plan the trip, while they were on the trip and then after the trip when it was over. Have the girls share their pictures and explain them to the troop.

**Don’t forget to share the success of the experience with the parents!
Tell them how you saw their daughter succeed and grow while she participated.**



Unit 2: Trip Safety

Safety Policies

As Girl Scout activities keep pace with an ever-changing world, ensuring the health and safety of the girls is paramount. Safety is the responsibility of girls and adults alike. When Girl Scouts learn about safety, more activities are within their reach. The two key resources for safety information are *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and *Volunteer Essentials*.

Please review *Safety Activity Checkpoints* on gswcf.org for additional safety information beyond the key points outlined in this planning guide.

The information outlined on the next few pages will cover some key areas of safety to help the troop get started with planning the trip.

Trip Safety Preparation

Every troop must have for their trip:

- A submitted troop travel application form for:
 - Simple overnight trips approved by the Service Unit that are:
 - Less than 3 nights
 - not GSWCF council sponsored events or at a council property
 - Any trip that includes a high-risk activity
 - Extended and International Trips 3 nights or more must be approved by Council
- Girl Permission for Troop Activity Forms* and *Health Forms*.
- Proper girl/adult ratios, including the correct number of registered and background checked adults.
- Insurance forms and an *Incident/Accident Report Form* placed in first-aid kit or readily available.
- Additional Accident and Sickness Insurance as needed.
- At least one person certified in First-Aid/CPR (by a GS approved organization) in attendance for the duration of the trip. Make sure your First-Aider is among the first to arrive.
- Fully stocked first-aid kit.
- Notification of any medications taken by troop/group members and written permission and instructions for dispensing from the parent/guardian with the First-Aider.
- Appropriate sleeping arrangements if the trip is an overnight.
- A designated emergency contact person with a trip roster. (An adult, not on the trip, who is willing to communicate with families and the troop in case of an emergency.)
- Troop Leader ensures that all drivers follow the Checklist for Drivers (in SAC) and sign the Safe Driver Pledge.

Transportation

Please plan your transportation needs well in advance. Ride-share vehicles are now approved means of travel, provided other *Safety Activity Checkpoints* guidelines are followed. Please note: The use of 12-15 passenger vans **does not meet** the GSWCF safety criteria and should not be used for transporting children. School buses, minibuses and minivans continue to be our preferred vehicles for transporting children.

	Permitted	
Approved transportation:	Private Car Rented Car or Minivan Bus Train Plane Boat Ride-share vehicles	Consult <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints - Transporting Girls</i> for most current recommendations and guidelines

Girl/Adult Ratios

Girl Scouts' adult-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls- for example, if one adult has to respond to an emergency, a second adult is always on hand for the rest of the girls. Adults must be registered and background checked. Drivers must be over 21.

	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two non-related adults (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for each number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	1-12	20	1-10
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9-10)	30	1-15	24	1-12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30	1-15	24	1-12

Involving Parents & Caregivers

Parent involvement in Girl Scout troops can sometimes be a sensitive topic. While parents are encouraged to volunteer with their daughter's troops, it is important to remember that too many adult volunteers at one time can interfere with the type of environment that promotes personal growth and self-reliance for the girls. However, even when a parent isn't going to chaperone an event or trip it is important to still keep them informed of plans so that they can feel comfortable with their daughters going without them.

Parent Expectations for Any Girl Scout Activity

- A well planned trip with goals and program elements that support the values inherent in Girl Scouting.
- "Rules" for participation well in advance: payment schedules, who can go (tagalongs, etc.), registration and background check requirements, training requirements, whose expenses will be paid (girls only, required chaperones also, etc.)
- A detailed budget and an affordable trip; wise use of troop funds.
- An adequate number of well-prepared adult chaperones; willing to work with all girls.
- Emotional and physical safety.
- Ample notice of what their daughters will be expected to provide for the trip, such as medical exams, special equipment or clothing items, spending money, participation in fundraiser activities, etc.
- A detailed itinerary including departure and arrival times and locations.
- In-town and traveling emergency contacts – role, name, and all contact information.
- Notice of changes or updates in plans.

Information in Writing

It's best to provide information in writing for all trips. As a trained leader, you have the knowledge and information that parents may not. Plan to schedule one or more parent meetings. The number will depend on the complexity of the trip, the age of the girls and their (and their parents') previous experience with Girl Scout trips. Information you should share with them includes:

- Council policies and safety standards governing the trip and money-earning projects. (Safety Activity Checkpoints, Volunteer Essentials, first-aid kits, First-Aid & CPR certification requirements, service unit & council permission if required, etc.)
- Required girl/adult ratios.
- Written parental permission for administration of medication.
- Girl and accompanying adults' behavior expectations.
- Purpose of the trip and activities that achieve this. (Good program.)
- The importance of girl-led planning and travel progression.
- The importance of opportunities for girls to learn independence and self-reliance.

Recruiting Trip Chaperones

- In most cases it is best if only the number of adults required to meet supervision ratios attend the trip. This is because Girl scout trips are:
 - Designed to help girls learn self-reliance.
 - Intended to be fun learning experiences for girls and should not be considered family vacations. Begin to immediately consider how it will be decided which adults will help chaperone and how this might be done without hurting the feelings of those who will not be going.
- As the troop leader, you have the right to decide which adults will go with you on the trip. You may be surprised at how many parents want to go. If possible, try to rotate chaperones on the shorter, more frequent trips. Any potential chaperones should attend at least one preparatory trip before commitment to a longer trip.
- Make sure the chaperone knows what you expect.
 - They understand they are there to help you supervise the girls and their activities.
 - They should not show their daughters special treatment.
 - Whether, or how much of, the adults' expenses will be paid with troop funds.
 - They understand and agree to follow safety precautions.
- Establish yourself as the group leader. Girls should learn to listen to all adults. However there may be times when you have to override the word of another adult because of safety precautions, etc.

Expectations for Chaperones

Troop leaders should review this with the adults going on the trip. Girl Scout adults should think of themselves as role models for the girls. Although most leaders are already sensitive to this, there are some guidelines to share with adult chaperones who may not regularly meet with your troop.

- Treat girls and other adults fairly by maintaining a positive attitude and controlling your temper.
- Always be sure to use appropriate language around girls.
- Help girls learn from difficult situations and encourage everyone to work together to find more positive solutions. Model flexibility and good humor especially in challenging circumstances to maintain a calm, safe experience for the girls.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all Girl Scout Activities including after the girls are asleep! Smoking should be done only in appropriate areas away from girls.
- Only the First-Aider will administer over-the-counter or prescription medications. Maintain a health log for medication doses and other first-aid treatment.
- Wear clothing appropriate for working with children.
- Set a good example for girls in the way they behave, dispose of trash, follow rules, and get along with others. Cooperate with the troop leader's directions.
- Treat all girls equally by not showing any one girl preferential treatment over another.
- Mistakes might happen, all may not go smoothly. It is important that girls have the opportunity to learn from mistakes and be able to cope with "less than perfect."

Sleeping Arrangements

Sleeping Arrangements for Overnights

Always ensure the following:

- Each participant has her own bed.
- Girls can share beds with written consent
- Girls and adults do not share a bed.

In an instance where adults need to share a sleeping area with girls (For example: an open space sleeping environment or to support a girl with special needs), there should always be at least two unrelated adult females present.

Men on Overnights

Men are welcome to attend trip and overnight outings with Girl Scouts and camp at GSWCF properties. However, the following guidelines need to be followed.

- Men do not sleep in the same tent or room with the girls or other females.
- Restroom arrangements must be made as separate, clearly marked, facilities for men. Please see ranger.
- Remember that other troops using the property may have male volunteers with them.

High Risk Activities

If your trip includes a high risk activity as designated in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, it must be **approved by the council in which the activity is taking place** and must be indicated on the Parent Permission for Troop Activity form with a detailed description of the high risk activity.

CAUTION: The following list of activities are *never* allowed for any girl:

<p>Bungee jumping Flying in privately owned planes, helicopters, or blimps Hang gliding Untethered hot-air ballooning Hunting Snowmobiling Riding a motorbike Riding electric Scooters</p>	<p>Using outdoor trampolines Parachuting or skydiving Parasailing Paintball tagging Riding all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) Stunt skiing Zorbing</p>
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Certificate of Insurance (COI): COI's are the proof that a business has insurance to cover accidents. You must obtain a COI from the facility at which you are participating in a high risk activity. Note: You do not need to obtain a COI if you are visiting a GSWCF camp.

When preparing for any activity with girls, always refer to the Safety Guidelines in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) located in Forms & Documents at www.GSWCF.org.

Emergency Preparation

A First-Aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout-approved first-aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR.

- A First-Aider must be available on all trips and have a first-aid kit along with them at all times.
- Information on first-aid kits and medications can be found in the boxes below.
- Emergency procedures can be found in the current *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- An *Incident/Accident Report Form* should also be in the First-Aid kit for serious emergencies.
- Serious injuries should be reported immediately using the council emergency numbers.

First-Aid Kit

An effective, yet inexpensive first-aid kit can be made by using a container that has a plastic lid. Other good containers are a tackle box or a fanny pack. Contents can be found around the home or purchased at a minimal cost. Troop members can help obtain needed items. Look at the resource list in the appendix for a link to a list of necessary items a first-aid kit should contain.

Medications

Parents or guardians of girls who take prescribed or over-the-counter medications (for example, allergy pills) should inform leaders in advance. Over-the-counter or prescribed medications should be in the original container and administered in the prescribed dosage by or in the presence of the responsible adult as per the written instructions of a custodial parent, guardian or physician. Also, each girl must bring her own sunscreen and non-aerosol insect repellent from home and the girl's name should be clearly marked on the container. Sharing of these items is **not** permitted as some people have allergic reactions to certain types of sunscreen and insect repellent.

Important Information for Emergencies

An emergency contact person(s) is available at home for the duration of the event or trip. The emergency contact person is an adult who is willing to communicate with families and the troop in case of an emergency. The family of each girl should have the name and phone number of the emergency contact person.

The emergency contact person's packet should include the following checklist:

Names and phone numbers of everyone attending	Phone number of nearest police location
Names and phone numbers of all drivers	Schedule of activities
Name of, directions and phone number where you are going/staying (hotel, activity site, etc.)	Council emergency number

Additional Insurance

Activity Accident Insurance. Activity accident insurance is a supplemental health insurance that protects registered Girl Scout members. Members are automatically covered under basic activity accident insurance when participating in all Girl Scout events and activities including trips that involve two or fewer overnights.

Trips that are three overnights or more are not covered under the basic activity accident insurance. International trips and any activity with non-members are also not automatically covered. Activity accident insurance must be individually purchased for coverage under these scenarios. This form of insurance also includes coverage for sickness during the activity.

You will need to purchase extra activity accident insurance for outings and events that:

- Involve three or more overnights
- Take place outside U.S. territory
- Include non-members, such as siblings and friends

Trip Emergency Procedures

Complete the chart below for the upcoming trip. These are procedures that you will want to go over with your troop at the beginning of your trip.

What to do in case of.....?

Fire	
Storms	
Tornado	
Health/Accident Emergency	
Intruders	

Where is the nearest.....?

Phone	
Emergency Care Facility	
Hospital	

Reviewing Safety with the Girls

Health and safety is very important. Prior to your trip, you should brainstorm ideas for a basic set of rules for the group to follow while travelling. Discuss the safety rules and consequences that could result if they are not followed. Use the chart below for some ideas to help get you started. Have the girls give reasons why they think each of these rules are important. Try to relate the safety rules to things that the girls will understand. Example: “Why should we always use the Buddy System?” “If someone gets hurt, there is always someone to go for help.” Have the girls create their own rules to add to the chart.

Rule	Reason
Girls always use the buddy system.	
Girls don't leave the group without permission.	
Everyone wears closed toe shoes until bedtime.	
The troop takes a first-aid kit and certified First-Aider on each trip.	
The first-aid kit is checked before leaving to be sure it is stocked.	
Troops practice emergency evacuation drills.	
Weather radios and phones are available for emergencies. (Depending on trip location.)	
Girls know that it's important to tell an adult if they are hurt or sick.	

Major Emergency Procedures

Person in charge at the scene needs to follow these procedures:

Use the **GSWCF Incident/Accident Information Report** found at gswcf.org/forms-documents. Forms and Documents tab is located in the upper right of the screen of www.gswcf.org.

- 1) **GIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO PROVIDING PROPER CARE FOR THE INJURED PERSON.**
Secure doctor, ambulance, clergyman and police as appropriate. Retain a responsible adult at the scene of the accident/emergency, provide all possible care for the sick and injured. Notify Camp Ranger or Outdoor Team member.
- 2) **NOTIFY PARENT OR GUARDIAN,** reporting nature of emergency, condition of injured and present location of the injured person.
- 3) **REPORT THE INCIDENT TO STAFF AT THE LEADERSHIP CENTER** at (813)281-4475, or 1-800-881-4475, as soon as possible within 24 hours or on the first working day following incident. The responsible adult and Camp Ranger should coordinate getting the report to the Leadership Center in Tampa.
- 4) **IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH, SERIOUS ACCIDENT, or MAJOR EMERGENCY,** contact by telephone one of the following (call collect, if necessary; continue calling until one is reached.)
 - a) **In the event of a fatality, always notify the police.** Retain a responsible adult at the scene of the accident and see that no disturbance of victim or surroundings is permitted until the police have assumed authority.
 - b) **Contact by telephone one of the following** (call collect, if necessary; continue calling until one is reached.)
 - o **The Camp Ranger** (phone number in camp packet received at check-in)
 - o **Outdoor Program team member** (phone number in camp packet received at check-in)
 - o **Mary Pat King**, Chief Executive Officer – Office: 813-262-1812 Cell: 703-582-9626
 - o **James Barringer**, Chief Operating Officer – Office: 813-262-1799 Cell: 813-325-9086
- 5) **MAKE NO STATEMENTS** (talking or in writing), which could be interpreted either as an assumption or rejection of responsibility for the accident. Refer all media (press, radio, TV, social media) to Chief Marketing Officer, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer....they are the **only official spokespersons** for the organization.
- 6) **PREPARE A CHRONOLOGICAL WRITTEN REPORT RECORDING:**
 - Exact time of each occurrence
 - Each step taken and by whom.
 - Exact statements made to whom and by whom.
 - A sketch of the scene, including physical pertinences and placement of people involved.
 - Names and addresses of all witnesses.File the report, fax to (813) 282-8374, or email to mzuloaga@gswcf.org

Unit 3: Forms and Resources

Resources

Resource	Purpose	Where to Find It
Volunteer Essentials	Primary resource with information on Girl Scouting, council policies, and safety.	https://www.gswcf.org/en/volunteers/VolunteerEssentials.html
Safety Activity Checkpoints	Safety guidelines written for specific activities.	https://www.gswcf.org/en/our-council/forms-and-documents.html
Anatomy of a First Aid Kit	Recommendations on what you should have in your troop's first aid kit.	redcross.org
GSUSA Travel website	Website for Girl Scout domestic, international and Destination travel	forgirls.girlscouts.org/travel/
Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel	Guide to get started with a trip in the region or anywhere in the United States.	Guide-to-US-Travel
Girl Scout Global Travel Toolkit	Takes girls through the steps of planning their own international group trip.	Global-Travel-Toolkit
Game Resources	Website with information on games you can play.	ultimatecampresource.com
Song Resources	Websites with information on fun Girl Scout songs.	gsleaders.org
Troop Support	General questions about traveling	Contact your Community Membership Manager (CMM) or CustomerConnections@gswcf.org
Resource Center	Books on travel, information about Destination trips, and items for check out including games and compasses!	Located at the Leadership Center -- 4610 Eisenhower Blvd. Tampa, FL. 33634

Forms

Frequently used form for travel and overnight planning are available at: www.gswcf.org

Form	Purpose	Submission Deadline	Where to submit form
Girl Permission	Document providing written consent by the parent/guardian for troop activities	When girls join the troop	Troop Leader
Health Record	A record of a girl's past and present health status (for example, of allergies, chronic illnesses and injuries), which her parent/guardian completes for Girl Scouts.	When girls join the troop	Troop Leader
Safe Driver Pledge	Every driver must be a registered and background checked adult volunteer, at least 21 years old, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered & insured vehicle. Every driver must complete a Safe Driver Pledge.	Prior to trip departure	Troop Leader
Troop Travel Application Forms	A form must be submitted for any overnight trip that are not GSWCF council sponsored events or a council property. Extended trips require Council Approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight trip (1-2 nights) – 4 weeks prior to trip (only Service Unit approval needed if not a GSWCF council sponsored event or council property) • 6 weeks prior for trips 3+ nights • 3 month prior for international trips 	Use one of these forms: Simple Overnight Troop Travel Application Extended Overnight Troop Travel Application
Incident/Accident Report	A form that must be completed in the event of an accident or injury.	Within 24 hours of incident	Governance Manager 813-281-4475 customerconnections@gs-wcf.org
Request for Additional Insurance	A form used to purchase Accident & Sickness insurance for trips 3+ nights or for anyone participating in your activity that is not registered Girl Scouts member.	3 weeks prior to activity Review the Girl Scouts insurance plan description here: https://www.mutualofomaha.com/girl_scouts_of_the_usa/index.htm	Accident and Sickness Insurance Order Form

Ready to travel?

Prior to filling out your application, ensure that:

- All girl members and troop leaders are registered and background checked with the Girl Scouts of West Central Florida.
- Adults participating in trip understand the purpose of the trip, health and safety requirements, and their role in the girl/adult partnership.
- The cost of the trip is feasible for the troop and manageable for each individual troop member.
- The trip is appropriate for your program level - i.e. consider length of time, distance, activities, and readiness of troop members.
- Adequate adult coverage is in compliance with Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of West Central Florida's **Safety Activity Checkpoints**.
- Trip plans were shared with all parents/ guardians.
- Make sure you have your leader trainings completed. These include:
 - Traveling Troops
 - Let's Get Organized
 - Let's Work Together
 - Let's Get Girl-Led
- Ensure at least one adult attending has the proper First Aid/CPR certification.
- If you plan to swim or participate in water activities, make sure you have a designated adult with lifeguard certification.
- If you will be camping, make sure you've completed the appropriate level of camp training.



GSUSA Leadership Outcomes



5 Ways Girl Scouts Builds Girl Leaders

Girl Scouts' mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Since 1912, girls have explored new fields of knowledge, learned valuable skills, and developed strong core values through Girl Scouts. Today Girl Scouts is, as it always has been, the organization best positioned to help girls develop important leadership skills they need to become successful adults.

At Girl Scouts, guided by supportive adults and peers, girls develop their leadership potential through age-appropriate activities that enable them to *discover* their values, skills, and the world around them; *connect* with others in a multicultural environment; and *take action* to make a difference in their world. These activities are designed to be girl led, cooperative, and hands-on—processes that create high-quality experiences conducive to learning.

When girls participate in Girl Scouts, they benefit in 5 important ways:



STRONG SENSE OF SELF

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



POSITIVE VALUES

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



CHALLENGE SEEKING

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



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

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



COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING

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



girl scouts 
of west central florida

Tampa Leadership Center

4610 Eisenhower Blvd.

Tampa, FL 33634

(813) 281-4475 • (800) 881-4475

www.gswcf.org