



Girl Scouts Guide to Troop Trips





Girl Scout Mission

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

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

Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri

2300 Ball Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63146

Camp Cedarledge

8501 Girl Scout Rd.
Pevely, MO 63070

Camp Fiddlecreek

553 Daisy Ln.
Labadie, MO 63055

Camp Tuckaho

163 Tuckaho Ln.
Troy, MO 63379

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Course Objectives and Resources

At the end of this learning experience, with the materials provided, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the progression of troop trips through the program levels.
2. Explain how to incorporate Journeys and The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting themes to plan troop trips.
3. Cite the factors involved in choosing a destination and planning a troop trip.
4. Explain the importance of establishing a Code of Conduct.
5. Identify records that should be maintained for a troop trip.
6. Complete a troop trip application.
7. Understand troop money-earning procedures.

Use the following resources for in-depth information after this course is over:

- WAGGGS World Centers, <https://worldcentres.waggggs.org/>
- Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel, <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/group-travel.html>
- Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel, <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/group-travel.html>
- Girl Scouts Destinations program, <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/destinations.html>
- U.S. passports and international travel: U.S. Department of State, <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>
- Eastern Missouri Travel page, <https://www.girlscoutsem.org/en/members/for-volunteers/travel.html>
- Troop Trip Application Packet, <https://www.girlscoutsem.org/en/members/for-volunteers/travel.html>
- Eastern Missouri *Volunteer Essentials*, <https://girlscoutsem.cld.bz/GSEM-Volunteer-Essentials>
- *Safety Activity Checkpoints*, https://www.girlscoutsem.org/content/dam/girlscoutsem-redesign/documents/All_Safety_Activity_Checkpoints.pdf

Troop Trip Policies

Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri defines a Girl Scout trip as any activity away from a regular troop meeting time and place.

- Daisies and older levels may participate in day trips (daytime activities away from regular troop meeting time and places) and local overnights such as backyard camping, or non-camping local overnights at locations such as the YMCA, church, or school. No Troop Trip application is needed, but you should inform your neighborhood manager.
- Daisy troops participating in overnight experiences must be accompanied by a parent or guardian for each girl in addition to their leader.
- Girl Scout Brownies may participate in domestic troop trips of no more than two nights and three days.
- Girl Scout Juniors may participate in domestic troop trips of no more than four nights and five days, but only if they have successfully participated in a progression of overnight trips within Girl Scouting.
- Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors may participate in domestic or international troop trips of any duration, but only if they have successfully participated in a progression of overnight and extended trips within Girl Scouting.
- Participants must be registered girls or registered, background-checked and approved adults for the membership year during which the trip will take place.
- Unapproved adults and tagalongs may not attend troop trips. Tagalongs are non-member girls accompanying a troop or group, registered members of a different troop/group, but who are not the appropriate ages for the event or activity, or boys ages 12 and below. This applies to Troop Trips and not to family camping at council campgrounds, however even in those cases all adults must be background-checked.
- An adult who is currently certified in Adult and Pediatric First Aid, CPR/AED must accompany all troops/groups on troop trips. Additional certifications may be required for activities including swimming, camping or using watercraft.
- The Director of Risk Management must approve all contracts and agreements.
- If the troop is paying for any adults, the troop may pay for no more than the number of adults required to meet ratio, drive, or support participants with disabilities.
- All requested documentation must be submitted no less than four months prior to departure for domestic trips and eight months for international trips to be approved. The trip leader should always carry the following documentation for the duration of the trip:
 - Girl Health History & Annual Permission Form, F-57 for each girl
 - Adult Activity Waiver, VP-84 for each adult
 - Girl Health and Permission Form for Travel, F-59 for each girl if the trip exceeds three days and two nights or is international

- International travel: Permission to Travel Form for Minors for any girl under the age of 18. The trip leader should keep the originals and submit copies to the Troop Support Coordinator that will remain at home
- International travel: copies of passports (that will be valid at least six months beyond the return date of the trip) for each girl and adult
- Accessibility Support Plan that you created with council and the caregiver for participating individuals with disability and/or medical condition, if needed
- Council provides assistance when planning travel including any participants with disabilities and/or medical conditions. Contact the Chief Engagement & Belonging Officer for assistance. Consider needs and discuss travel with the participant (depending on the level) and a caregiver at the start of trip planning to ensure accessibility is considered and addressed as needed. Not all individuals with disability/medical condition may need extra support to participate.

Troop Trip Requirements

Girl Scout Troops must have the following in place to apply for a Troop Trip:

- Troop Year End Report on file at Council for the most recent reporting period.
- Meet Adult Supervision ratios: Refer to adult-to-girl ratios in the Standard Safety Guidelines found in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and ensure the number of adults is aligned with those ratios.
- General First Aider required for all trips: Refer to adult-to-girl ratios in the Standard Safety Guidelines found in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- Advanced First Aider required when emergency medical response (EMS) is more than 30 minutes away: Refer to adult-to-girl ratios in the Standard Safety Guidelines found in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- [Health History and Annual Permission Form](#) (F-57) for each Girl Scout.
- [Girl Health and Permission Form for Travel](#) (F-59) for domestic trips that exceed two nights.
- [Adult Activity Waiver](#) (VP-84) for each adult.
- Additional international documentation requirements:
 - Copies of passports for all participants
 - Notarized [Permission to Travel Form for Minors](#) for girls under the age of 18
 - [Girl Health and Permission Form for Travel](#) (5-59)

Items to submit:

- Completed Troop Trip application and supporting documents.
- Proof of Insurance: Certificate of Insurance (COI) showing commercial general liability insurance for each facility or vendor being used. COIs are not required from public use facilities, such as major chain hotels, state parks, campgrounds, restaurants and museums if they are used as the average visitor does.
 - In cases where you are visiting during non-business hours or touring behind-the-scenes, GSEM policy requires you to obtain a COI.
- Submit unsigned contracts and agreements for council approval. When you as a troop or trip leader sign an agreement, GSEM must review the filled out but unsigned agreement prior to signature.
- Supporting documentation or certification for activities such as swimming, canoeing, camping. Please refer to activity-specific requirements found in the *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.

Using Journeys and Girl Guides

Some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout's life happen while taking trips. Travel offers a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership, confidence and practical life skills. The information covered in this training can help you and girls prepare for local, regional or international travel. Girl Scout travel is an ideal way to offer girls leadership opportunities. Encourage girls to choose one of the three series of [National Leadership Journeys](#). The Journey's theme will give girls a way to explore leadership through their travels. Use the adult guide to incorporate activities and discussions that help girls explore the Three Keys to Leadership (Discover, Connect, and Take Action) as they plan their trip and eventually travel.

Tying your trip to the topic of a Leadership Journey is a cinch. For example, if Cadette girls have chosen MEdia, before their trip they can read online newspapers from the area to which they're traveling—and evaluate when they arrive how well the media reflects the realities there. If Senior girls are using SOW WHAT?, they can plan to observe agricultural practices in other parts of the country or around the world. Ambassadors using BLISS: Live It! Give It! can build a trip around dreaming big—and empowering others in their community to dream big too!

If girls also want to complete badge requirements as part of their trip, they can. The Journey adult guides have a lot of ideas about trips that bring the Journeys to life, and many troops choose to earn badges as part of their trip-planning and travel adventures. The most obvious example is the Senior Traveler Badge, which fits perfectly into planning a trip. In addition, girls can explore other badge topics, depending on the focus of their trip. For example, Girl Scout Cadettes can explore the food in other regions or countries for their New Cuisines Badge, Girl Scout Seniors can find out about international business customs as part of their Business Etiquette Badge and Girl Scout Ambassadors can work on their Photography Badge while documenting their trip.

To ensure that any travel you do with girls infuses the Girl Scout Leadership Experience at every opportunity, limit your role to facilitating the girls' brainstorming and planning, but never do the work for them. Allow the girls to lead, learn collaboratively and learn by doing and making mistakes. All the while, however, provide ideas and insight, ask tough questions when you must and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement.

For additional ideas, check out the [Girl Scouts Badge Explorer](#), the [Troop Year Planner](#) or log onto the VTK from the council website for more ideas.



Progression of Troop Trips

Girl Scouts is a great place to learn how to plan and take trips! Traveling is built upon a progression of activities and girl-led processes. Girl Scout Daisies, for example, can begin with a discovery walk planned by the leaders. By the time the girls are Cadettes or older they can plan their own national and international travel!

Although many troops decide to travel together, Girl Scouts may also get together specifically for traveling. Girls might join a trip with other girls from around their council or form a new troop with other girls who like to travel. Girl Scouts of the USA also offers individual Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors the chance to travel independently and meet other Girl Scouts from across the country through the Destinations program.

Recommended Progression of Trips and Travel for Girl Scouts

Level 1

Short trips to local points of interest (Girl Scout Daisies and older)

A walk to a nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to a firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. Keep it girl-led: girls can choose the location!

Level 2

Day trips (Girl Scout Daisies and older)

An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a day-long trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal) allows younger girls to select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home. Note: Full-day trips may be very challenging for Daisies, especially for kindergartners who have not experienced short trips. Make sure girls take some short trips before they progress to a full day trip.

Additional day trip ideas: Visit local organizations or businesses, cookouts or picnics, field trips, sports events.

Level 3

Overnight trips (Girl Scout Brownies, Juniors and older)

Girl Scout Brownie and Junior troops are limited to domestic trips of no more than two nights and three days. Nights away could start with a one-night camping trip to a Girl Scout property and progress to a visit to a state or national park, or nearby city for sight-seeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground—or even an overnight at a large museum!

Additional ideas: Discovery trips in the neighborhood or nearby places, community sites such as historical buildings or museums, hikes, camp outs, stays in hotels and camps.

Level 4

Extended/National overnight trips (Girl Scout Cadettes and older)

Travel anywhere in the country can often last a week or more. Try to avoid ordinary recreational trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component—such as incredible cities, historic sites and museums around the country.

Perhaps the girls want to plan a trip to some national parks as part of the [Girl Scout Ranger](#) program.

Level 6

International trips (Girl Scout Cadettes and older): Travel around the world can require two to three years of preparation. Ensure passports, documentation, visas and customs requirements are in order well in advance of your trip. International trips are available to Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors, but only to those who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight and extended trips within Girl Scouting.

Additional ideas for Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors: state capitol or Girl Scout National Center, visiting troops in other parts of the country, combining camping with exploration and travel.

When thinking about progression, consider things like girls’:

- Ability to be away from parents and their homes
- Ability to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and situations
- Ability to make decisions for themselves and the good of the group well and easily
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Previous cross-cultural experiences, skills, interests and language skills (where applicable)

Girl Scout Destinations Program

Destinations travel adventures, which range from two days to three weeks and are for all Girl Scouts ages 11-17, whisk you to the far corners of the Earth. You’ll meet remarkable girls, develop leadership skills, gain confidence, and enjoy valuable learning opportunities. You will have the most awesome, outrageous, unforgettable trip of your life! See all Destinations on the GSUSA webpage at <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/destinations.html>.

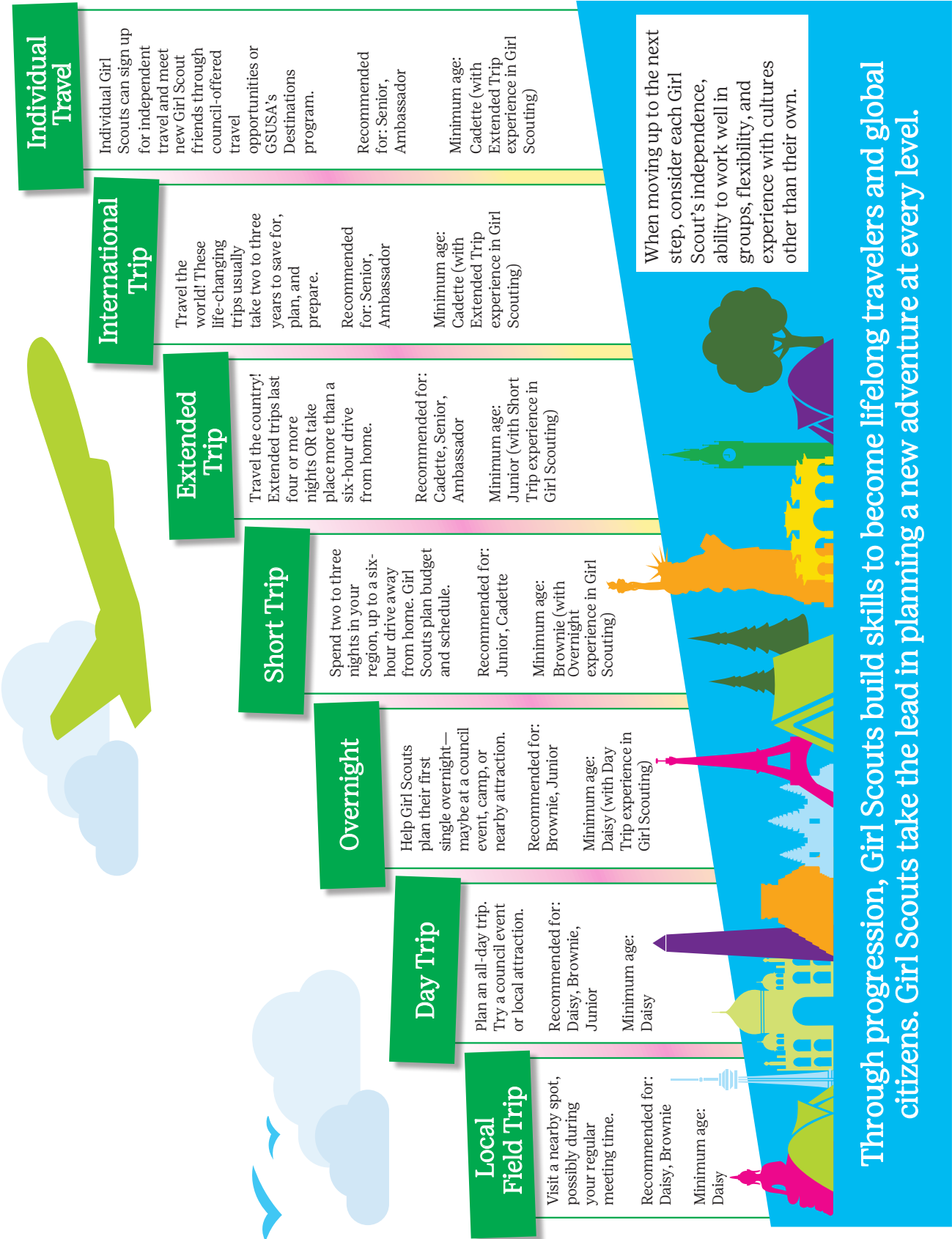
Girl Scout Getaways: Ready-Made Travel Experiences

Girl Scout travel is a lifelong journey that builds skills, memories, and friendships. Whether you’re traveling with your family, your troop, or on your own with a group, you’ve got Girl Scout resources and ideas to help every step of the way. Check out curated events hosted by Girl Scout councils and partners at www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/group-travel.html. Your troop can just register and go!



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.



Choosing a Destination

When a troop is preparing to choose a destination for a trip, the following guidelines should be taken into consideration:

1. There should be purpose for the trip (e.g. to learn about a historical site, to experience a different culture, to take a train trip, to camp in a different climate, etc.).
2. The trip must meet GSUSA and eastern Missouri council policies and standards.
3. The girls must be able to handle the responsibilities involved.
4. The trip should be accessible for all members of the troop.
5. Girls and adults should be realistic in their choices.
6. Parents should be supportive of the project.

Suggested resources for choosing destinations:

- Books on travel from the library
- Maps
- National Geographic magazines
- Relatives, friends and neighbors who have traveled
- Travel agents
- Travel brochures from family vacations
- Travel guides
- Travel magazines
- Internet research

Learn more:

- Girl Scouts Destinations program at <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/ways-to-participate/Travel/destinations.html>
- U.S. passports and international travel at the U.S. Department of State at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>
- Traveler's health (vaccines, medicine, advice) at the Centers for Disease Control at <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>
- Additional information and resources for international travel
- Enroll in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at [https:// step.state.gov/step/](https://step.state.gov/step/). It is also recommended that you complete GSUSA's International Intent to Travel form, as well as utilize [GSUSA's Global Travel Guide](#).
- Periodically check the travel advisory/alert level(s) for the country/ies via the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs. Confirm that both girls and parents/guardians have this information.

The Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace in Savannah is a fantastic place for Cadettes and older to visit.

Reservations and council approval are required to take a group of girls to visit the Birthplace, and most educational opportunities are booked at least a year in advance, so book early!

In addition, four lodges are available in England, Mexico, Switzerland, and India for use by Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, each with hostel-or dormitory-style lodging. The World Centers are operated by WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) and offer low-cost lodging and special programs. They are also a great way to meet Girl Guides and Girl Scouts from around the world.

Involving Chaperones

To determine how many volunteer chaperones the girls will need with them on the trip, refer to the adult-to-girl ratios provided in [Volunteer Essentials](#) or [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). Be sure every chaperone reviews and follows the guidelines in Safety Activity Checkpoints, as well as in this training.

As you ask for chaperones, be sure to look for ones who are committed to:

- Being a positive role model
- Respecting all girls and adults equally, with no preferential treatment
- Creating a safe space for girls
- Prioritizing the safety of all girls
- Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement
- Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a sense of humor
- Creating an experience for and with girls
- Getting fit (appropriate to the trip)

Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need: Adult-to-Girl Ratios

Whatever the activity, adult supervision is required regardless of the grade level of the girls. The table below has been developed to show the minimum number of registered, approved adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls.

	Troop Meetings		Events, Travel and Camping	
	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female for every:	One additional volunteer to each additional:	Two unrelated volunteers (at least one of whom is female for every:	One additional volunteer to each additional:
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

**A Girl Scout Daisy troop may only participate in a volunteer-led overnight experience with a registered adult leader and one parent/guardian for each Girl Scout Daisy. Girls who have completed kindergarten may independently participate in Day Camp and Overnight Camp experiences, lasting up to three nights. Girls who have completed first grade may independently participate in Overnight Camp experiences lasting four or more nights.*

Adults in Addition to Chaperones

Traveling with Girl Scouts is unique from other organizations because girls take the lead—both during the planning and on the trip. This helps girls build essential skills, develop confidence, overcome challenges and practice collaboration.

Girls are most likely to achieve these outcomes when they travel with the recommended adult-to-girl ratios, rather than with too many adults on the trip. When there are too many adults participating, it becomes difficult for the trip to remain girl-led. You may want to start your travel experiences with Girl Scout Daisies by inviting parents to join local field trips and day trips. When parents are involved, make certain you model for them girl-led practices, and help them take a support role to girl decision-making. That way, by the time girls are ready for a weekend trip, and definitely a regional or national trip, your girls are ready to do the planning and to make decisions fully on the trip.

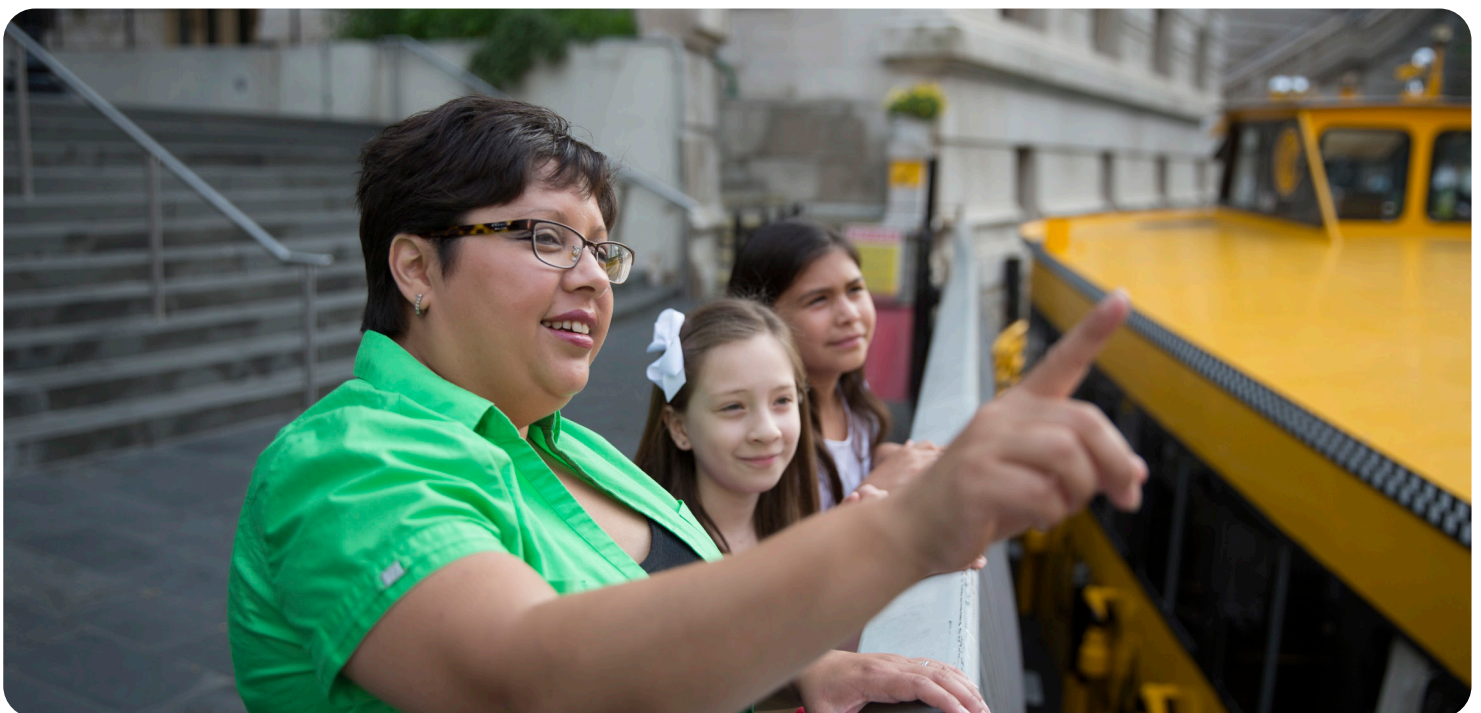
Additional parents/caregivers, beyond what is required to meet the adult-to-girl ratio, may not attend as a tag-alongs on troop trips. If Girl Scouts are not ready to travel without a parent, they are not yet ready to step up to a more intensive trip. When you give Girl Scouts the chance to travel independently (with their leaders, of course!) you help them build decision-making skills, independence and confidence, and provide them with a powerful component in their full Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Including Girls with Disabilities

Talk to Girl Scouts with disabilities and their caregivers about travel. Ask about accessibility needs and supports for each aspects of the trip (i.e., transportation, activities, lodging, meals, medical/personal care, etc.). Girl Scouts may need additional support such as an aide to accompany them during travel, this person is considered separate from a chaperone, but their travel would be covered by troop travel funds. Contact Council for support and assistance with planning inclusive travel. If a venue/location is not accessible for individuals with disabilities who will be on the trip, then you'll need to modify your plans and find an accessible venue/location. For more information, visit Open Doors, <https://opendoorsnfp.org/>, a great reference for learning and traveling with disabilities.

Equity

Consider the history, culture, and past experiences of the Girl Scouts in your troop work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel more comfortable and can fully participate, such as prior experiences and the skills needed to enjoy the activity.



Lodging Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Hotels and Motels	
Usually clean and comfortable	Usually require a deposit
Have telephone and television	Have telephone and television
Often provide group discounts	Can be expensive
Frequently close to attractions	Must split into groups
State or National Parks	
Inexpensive	Need own equipment
Safe location	Far from attractions
Some offer lodges or tents	May be difficult to make a reservation
Private Campgrounds	
Cheaper than hotels/motels	Can be expensive
Close to attractions	Lots of people
University/College Dorms	
Usually inexpensive	Can be difficult to reserve
Good location	Uncontrollable room temperature
Some offer cafeterias	Group will be separated
Churches or School Gymnasiums	
Inexpensive/free	Usually sleep on floors
Good locations	May not have a shower facility
Group can stay together	Need sleeping bags and pillows
Resorts	
Lodging and meals included	Expensive
Planned activities	May be too structured
Condominiums	
Can sleep several people	Can be expensive
Kitchen facilities provided	Can be difficult to locate
Close to attractions	Usually no pool
Military Bases	
Inexpensive/free	Strict rules
Safe	Need own building
Inexpensive meals	Usually restricted to one building

Pros	Cons
Bed and Breakfast	
Good atmosphere and location	Expensive
One meal included	Cannot accommodate large groups

When Planning Lodging

- Review and abide by Overnight Trips in Standard Safety Guidelines and the Travel/Trips section of *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.
- Consult with Council to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities/medical conditions.
- Camping:
 - If you will be camping for less than one week at a non-GSEM-owned site that is within, or no more than 100 miles beyond GSEM's boundaries, submit the Application for Camping on Non-Council-Owned Sites (C-9a) to Risk Management for review and approval.
 - For camping experiences more than 100 miles beyond GSEM's boundaries, submit the Troop Trip Application.
- Hotels:
 - You do not need to request COIs from nationally recognized hotel chains.
 - Each Girl Scout must have their own bed. Girl Scouts can share rooms, but not beds.
- For overnight lodging, proof of insurance must be submitted four weeks prior to departure.

Airbnb, VRBO and HomeAway

- These are permitted however because these are privately owned properties, it can be difficult to qualify safety and credibility. For these reasons, additional steps for Airbnb, VRBO and HomeAway are required. Confirm the following ahead of time:
 - The rental is for exclusive use of the home. No other renters will have access to the home during the rental period.
 - The space has smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers (these are noted as amenities).
 - The home and host have substantial, positive visitor reviews. Do not book places with negative, few or no reviews. Look for super-host status on Airbnb.
 - The liability insurance from the host covers premises for commercial use, with a minimum of one million dollars General Liability insurance.
 - Check the host's profile or identity verification. You may be asked to do the same, as a renter.
 - The local host or manager contact info is available for immediate needs. Share this information with an in-town contact (a person not on the trip).
 - Check state laws to see if Airbnb, VRBO and HomeAway are mandated to meet hotel laws and standards so that you know there is an extra layer of protection.

Check Lodging on Arrival

- No matter what housing you book, inspect premises with the group immediately on arrival. Let the front desk or host know if you find any deficiencies. Maintain a budget margin so that you can move to another location if you find a property unsafe.
- Items to inspect:
 - All points of entry are secure and lockable.
 - Ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities/medical conditions.
 - Evacuation routes, including stairs or fire escapes for multi-floor buildings are clear and known to all.
 - Basic safety systems are in place, as appropriate to the type of building and according to building codes in the jurisdiction, such as a fire extinguisher and smoke alarm.
 - Identify method to contact and the location of local emergency services communicate how to reach them to all.
 - Confirm any communication services (mobile carrier, Wi-Fi) are running and reliable.

How Do We Get There?

Private Transportation

Private transportation includes private passenger vehicles, rental cars, privately owned or rented recreational vehicles and campers, chartered buses, chartered boats and chartered flights. Each operator must be a registered, background-checked and approved adult volunteer at least 21 years old, have a good driving record, a valid operator's license appropriate to the vehicle, and a registered/insured vehicle. If the troop is traveling at least four hours or 240 miles in a non-commercial vehicle, the drivers' motor vehicle records will be checked.

Always check with council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation. This ensures that you are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident.

Transporting Girl Scouts

- For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities outside of the normal meeting time and place when a troop will be transported in private vehicles:
 - GSEM policy does not allow Girl Scouts to drive other Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts who are licensed drivers and who are under 21 years of age can only drive themselves and parents/caregivers
 - If a troop is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, registered, background-checked and approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female. In addition, the adult-to-girl ratios must be met
 - If a troop is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire troop must consist of at least two unrelated, registered, background checked and approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female, and the adult-to-girl ratios must be followed. Care should be taken so that a single vehicle is not separated from the troop for an extended length of time. Ensure all drivers have printed directions in addition to GPS maps
 - Girl Scouts may never be transported in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup or in a camper-trailer
 - State laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines listed here
 - The use of a 15 passenger van is prohibited unless a professional driver is employed
 - The use of Uber, Lyft, Curb and other ridesharing companies is not permitted, because the safety, credibility and insurance of the drivers is far more difficult to qualify than traditional or well-known charter and rental companies, and complete auto insurance coverage is often unavailable for a majority of rideshare drivers
 - If you are traveling more than 5 hours or 300 miles in one day, all drivers must complete a Check Driving Record Request form. Driving records will be checked no sooner than 3 months prior to departure.

Hiring Transportation

Using chartered buses is an option, however it can be expensive. If you are considering this option, please contact council to discuss. Chartered buses must meet Public Service Commission regulations. Troops and trip leaders should not sign chartered bus agreements or terms and conditions before submitting the agreement to Council for review. Always check with council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using chartered transportation.

Renting a Vehicle

- If you will be renting a vehicle:
 - Provide copies of rental confirmation(s) with your Troop Trip Application including a copy of the complete Terms & Conditions
 - Ensure the renter is aware that they are responsible for all damage to the rented vehicle(s). The contract(s) state(s) what costs are your responsibility in the event of damage or accident.
 - You may wish to 1) accept the insurance coverage offered through the rental agency, 2) use a credit card that offers vehicle rental insurance coverage to pay for the rental(s) and/or 3) rely on your personal automobile insurance coverage to pay for any damage to the rental(s) (in which case you should confirm with your automobile insurance provider that you have this coverage)
 - Always rent from a nationally-recognized agency. Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri can receive an Entrepise discount

Insurance

GSUSA Activity and Accident Insurance underwritten by Mutual of Omaha will now automatically extend to all activities and travel. Troops will no longer have to complete a separate form and pay for additional overnight and travel insurance.

Activity Accident insurance is automatic upon membership registration and applies to all adult and youth members who may become injured during a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity. This coverage works like supplemental medical/health coverage and is intended to help with out-of-pocket medical expenses that may not be covered by personal insurance. Activity Accident coverage for members applies to meetings, activities, day and overnight trips (including camp), and international travel.

Activity Accident insurance extends to non-members who are invited to participate in a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity, whether an adult volunteer for the day, or a friend of a Girl Scout who is joining along to try out scouting. Activity Accident coverage for invited non-members applies to meetings and activities only.

Activity Accident coverage applies to day events, overnight trips (including camp), and international travel. A summary of these coverage types for each category can be found [here](#).

Certificates of Insurance (COI)

A Certificate of Insurance (COI) is a form that identifies how much insurance coverage the holder possesses. Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri is obligated to ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, that any external entities, such as vendors, program providers/collaborators, organizations, companies, sites or facilities used are safe. One measure of safety is evidence of adequate insurance coverage.

- When planning a troop trip, you should obtain a COI from any involved external entities. COIs may be required for certain activities, modes of transportation, lodging, etc., to verify that they meet Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri's insurance standards (a minimum total per occurrence limit of \$1,000,000 in primary commercial general liability, with higher limits for certain external entities, such as commercial bus transportation and watercraft).
- COIs must be issued with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri listed as a Certificate Holder. For high-risk activities, including but not limited to high adventure (such as challenge courses, rock climbing, ziplining, etc.), hayrides, food-related and transportation, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri must also be named as an Additional Insured.

When requesting a COI for an accommodation, you may use the following language:

- "My Girl Scout troop plans to stay at your facility on our upcoming trip. When our Girl Scout Council's members stay at a facility for which the council does not have a current Certificate of Insurance on file, they would like one for their records. Would it be possible to obtain a copy of your COI with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, 2300 Ball Dr., St. Louis, MO 63146 listed as a Certificate Holder?"

When requesting a COI for an activity, you may use the following language:

- "My Girl Scout troop plans to visit your attraction on a coming trip. When our Girl Scout Council's members visit an attraction for which the council does not have a current Certificate of Insurance on file, they would like one for their records. Would it be possible to obtain a copy of your COI with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, 2300 Ball Dr., St. Louis, MO 63146 listed as a Certificate Holder?"

When requesting a COI for a high-risk activity, you may use the following language:

- "My Girl Scout troop plans to visit your attraction on a coming trip. When our Girl Scout Council's members participate in high-risk activities, the council would like a Certificate of Insurance on file with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, 2300 Ball Dr., St. Louis, MO 63146 listed as a Certificate Holder and Additional Insured. Would it be possible to obtain this?"

If you need assistance obtaining a COI for a trip or have questions about whether a COI is needed for a trip, contact the Senior Manager, Risk Management. Further information about COIs can be found on GSEM's Insurance page at girlscoutsem.org.

Itinerary Examples

Chicago Trip Itinerary using the aMaze Journey (sample)

Friday

Meet at school for trip to airport at 5 pm

Southwest flight #506M leaves St. Louis at 7:50 pm/arrives at Midway Chicago at 8:50 pm Taxi to hotel:
Renaissance Blackstone Chicago Hotel

636 South Michigan Ave.

Chicago, Illinois 60605

(312) 447-0955

Saturday

Morning—Chicago Children’s Museum (Earn Girl Scout badges at this interactive museum) Lunch

Afternoon—shopping Dinner at Grand Lux Café

Evening—Show at the Chicago Theatre

Sunday

Morning—Journey World Workshop (Lights, Camera, Action) Lunch

Southwest #351M return flight leaves Midway at 4:30 pm/arrives in St. Louis at 5:35 pm

Parents pick up girls at school



Itinerary Examples

Colorado Trip Itinerary

Friday

Meet at school at 5:30 am for 6 am departure— eat before you come

Bring sack lunch for first day

Arrive at Hays, KS about 4 pm

Visit Fort Hays historical area if time allows Dinner: Everybody's Restaurant

Lodging: Ramada Inn, Hays, KS, 913.628.8261

Saturday

Breakfast at motel Depart at 6 am

Lunch at rest area at Deer Trail, CO

Arrive at Estes Park mid afternoon

Dinner—cook in unit

Evening options— church services or ranger meeting in Rocky Mountain Park

Free time

Lodging: Fawn Valley Inn, 2760 Fall River Rd, Estes Park, CO, Units 215, 228, 255

Sunday

Breakfast horseback ride Lunch—prepare in unit

Afternoon—free time Dinner—prepare in unit

Evening—night hike to beaver dams with ranger

Monday

Breakfast—prepare in unit

Sightseeing and hike to Lulu City Ghost Town Lunch on trail

Dinner—prepare in unit Evening activity—to be decided

Tuesday

Breakfast—prepare in unit

Hike to Emerald Lake Lunch—prepare in unit

Shopping and visit Fun City Amusement Area

Dinner—prepare in unit

Evening—laundry and pack for backpacking

Wednesday

Breakfast—prepare in unit Backpack to Fern Lake

Group Camp Lunch on trail

Dinner in Camp

Thursday

Breakfast in Camp

Hike back to trailhead

Lunch on trail Afternoon—free time

Dinner—Lazy B Ranch (dinner and show)

Friday

Breakfast—prepare in unit

Depart at 7 am for drive to Salina, KS

Lunch—fast food at Goodland, KS

Dinner—Pizza Hut, Salina KS

Evening—free time or swim

Lodging: Best Western Mid-America, Salina, KS, 913.827.0356

Saturday

Breakfast—Road Runner Restaurant, Salina, KS

Lunch—fast food in Topeka or Kansas City

Stop in Columbia for break

Arrive home late afternoon

Parents pick up girls at school

Itinerary Examples

New England/Canada Trip Itinerary

Wednesday

Meet at school at 6 am to leave for St. Louis airport
Pick up rental van at Boston Airport and drive to motel
Afternoon and evening activities to be decided upon arrival

Thursday

Sightseeing in Boston—Freedom Trail and museums
Lunch—in town
Evening—open

Friday

Drive to Concord, visit Harvard
Afternoon—drive to Bar Harbor, Maine

Saturday

Sightseeing in Bar Harbor—drive through Acadia National Park, swim at Echo Lake, visit Lighthouse and shopping
Evening—whale watching

Sunday

To be decided based on girls' energy from previous days

Monday

Drive to St. John, New Brunswick.
See Reversing Falls and swim at water park

Tuesday

Morning—shopping at City Market
Afternoon—take ferry to Digby, Nova Scotia
Evening—drive into Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

Wednesday

Take cruise ship back to Portland, Maine
Free time to take advantage of any ship activities

Thursday

Drive to Boston to catch afternoon flight to St. Louis
Parents pick up girls at school

Sample Code of Conduct

Our Rights, Our Responsibilities: Code of Conduct (sample)

This Girl Scout travel opportunity is an exciting program that will require participants to engage in independent decision-making and take personal responsibility for the success of the program. To ensure the health and safety of program participants, Girl Scouts requires participants to adhere to this code of conduct. Any infraction of this code of conduct may result in the participant's immediate removal from the program and return to her family at the expense of the participant and her family.

Trip participants will:

- Abide by the Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Treat other participants and the people they meet with respect
- Obey Girl Scout policies and standards and observe Safety Activity Checkpoint guidelines
- Use the buddy system at all times
- Be responsible for their own possessions
- Observe curfew
- Participate in all group activities to the fullest extent they are able
- Attend meetings help to discuss the day's events and address any challenges
- Attend meals
- Report any injury, no matter how small
- Make sure the leaders know where they are at all times and never leave the program site unless a leader is with them
- Travel with a sense of wonder and a spirit of adventure

Trip participants will not:

- Engage in any behavior that may be harmful to the health and safety of the participant or others, or that may detrimental to the program
- Use tobacco products, illegal drugs, alcohol or foul language
- Go into any room or home occupied by someone who is not a member of this group
- Give personal information (e.g. room or telephone number) to anyone who is not a member of this group

I, _____, have read this code of conduct and agree to abide by it at all times. I understand that I am responsible for myself and the choices I make, and if I choose to do something that endangers myself or other participants, or goes against this agreement, I will be dismissed for the program and sent home at my own expense.

Participant _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Possible consequences of violating rules:

- Warning
- Become a leader's permanent buddy
- Phone call to a parent
- Sent home at parent's expense

Letting Girls Lead

Whether the trip is a day hike or a cross-country trek, the basic steps of trip planning are essentially the same. It's true that as the locale gets farther away, the itinerary more complex, and the trip of greater duration, the details become richer and more complex.

Planning every trip—from a day-long event to an international trek—starts by asking the following:

- Who will we want to talk to and meet? What will we ask?
- Where are we interested in going?
- When are we all available to go?
- Will everyone in our group be able to go?
- Are there physical barriers that cannot be accommodated?
- What are visiting hours and the need for advance reservations?
- What are our options for getting there?
- What's the least and most this trip could cost?
- What can we do now to get ourselves ready?
- How will we earn the money?
- What's the availability of drinking water, restrooms, and eating places?
- Where is emergency help available?
- What safety factors must we consider?
- What will we do as we travel?
- What will we do when we get there?
- How will we share the Take Action story?

As girls answer these questions, they begin the trip-planning process. In time, girls can make specific arrangements, attend to a myriad of details, create a budget and handle money, and accept responsibility for their personal conduct and safety. Later, after they've returned from an event or trip, girls also have the chance to evaluate their experiences and share them with others.

Staying Safe During the Trip

Be sure to review the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* “Travel/Trips” section for important safety information, including information about insurance, transportation, and international travel.

When preparing girls, be sure to discuss the following items with the girls and their parents before you leave on any trip.

You may also want to work with your girls to create a group behavior contract, and have girls sign it, and to create a personal emergency action plan that each girl can write herself and carry with her:

- Who her buddy is—and how the buddy system works
- What to do if she is separated from the group, whether by accident or because of a crime
- What to do if she loses something significant: money, passport, luggage
- How to report a crime
- What to do if emergency help is needed
- How to perform basic first-aid procedures
- How to deal with a large crowd (if applicable)
- What to do in the event of a crime
- What behaviors you expect—and what consequences exist for not living up to those behaviors

Travel Security and Safety Tips

Share these safety tips with girls before you leave on any trip that involves a stay in a hotel, motel, hostel or dormitory:

- Always lock the door behind you, use the deadbolt and the chain or anchor
- Do not open the door for strangers; if hotel staff claims to be at the door, call the front desk to confirm
- Don't mention or display your room number in the presence of strangers
- Never leave cash, jewelry, electronics or credit cards in your room
- Never leave luggage unattended
- When arriving at the hotel, make note of the emergency exits
- Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag that contains your room key, wallet, passport and cell phone. Take these items with you if you have to leave the room
- If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible, do not pack your suitcase
- Before leaving the room, feel the door. If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out of the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter
- Contact the front desk to make sure girls' rooms are cleared of any mini-bars or refrigerators. Also, be sure the hotel doesn't provide access to inappropriate movies on TVs and does not allow long-distance calls. Alert hotel management that underage girls are staying in the hotel and ask them to contact you if any girls are seen out of the rooms after bedtime

Coronavirus Safety in Girl Scouts

The health and safety of our members is always Girl Scouts' highest priority. Recognize that COVID-19 health and safety guidance will continue to evolve as the risk of coronavirus transmission changes over time. Being prepared to adjust for changes in coronavirus risk and the federal, state, and local protocols concerning pandemic safety is something we will all need to continue to manage carefully and factor into plans as appropriate.

Recognize that state and local rules concerning coronavirus safety will vary from place to place. Safety regulations will also change as the risk of transmission changes. Be sure to stay current on what is required in your region but also consider that troop members may reside in different areas with different sets of safety parameters to abide by. A good way to ensure you are following the proper government guidance is to follow the practices as established in local public schools.

Girl Scouts has provided COVID-19 guidance specific to the topics that touch our lives in Girl Scouts. Your Girl Scout council's COVID-19 guidance is the first place to go for health and safety practices in Girl Scouting. Remember, always make sure that your planned activity complies with all federal, state, and local government health authorities at your locations and also where the activity will take place. For a variety of reasons during a pandemic, there may be situations where your council's guidance is more strict than state or local guidance. If that is the case, either choose the rules that are most strict or contact your Girl Scout council for clarification.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before taking girls out for any activity and review it with the girls so they too are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a Girl Scout, missing Girl Scout, sudden illness, sudden weather or water emergencies, or lost medication.

Have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Keeping to the Girl Scout motto, "Be Prepared," proper preparation is the key to success. An important thing to consider, before taking Girl Scout members on a trip or to an activity, is an Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

Volunteers can review their troop's EAP with girls as a learning experience for them, to the extent it makes sense according to their age and maturity.

For the adult volunteer, it is important to think about and document an EAP for troop meetings and activities to ensure you are prepared in the event of an accident or injury. When creating an EAP, think through scenarios of what can go wrong, accident, physical injury to a girl, missing girl, sudden illness, sudden weather or water emergencies, wheelchair malfunctions, lost medication, unanticipated seizure, or triggered PTSD. This basic step is invaluable.

Learn about the key components of an EAP in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* found on the council's website.

Activity Preparation

Communicate with your Girl Scout council and girls' parents/guardians about the activity, including details about safety precautions and any appropriate clothing or supplies that may be necessary. Follow council procedures for activity approval, certificates of insurance, and guidelines about girls' general health examinations. Girls are key to activity planning. Keeping their grade level abilities in mind, encourage them to take proactive leadership roles in organizing details of the activity.

- ▶ **Swim Tests:** Swim tests are required every year for Girl Scouts participating in any type of aquatic activities including, but not limited to pool activity, canoeing, stand up paddleboards, etc.

Troop Money Earning Activities

Council-sponsored Product Programs are a great way to earn the funds necessary for girls to travel or carry out Take Action projects. If income from the Product Programs aren't enough, however, girls have more options. Troops can organize their own troop money-earning projects that are planned and carried out by the girls (not council). For a troop to participate in a money-earning activity other than the Girl Scout Cookie and Fall Product Programs, the troop leader must get written approval from their Neighborhood Treasurer. Leaders may do this by submitting a completed Troop Money-Earning Activity Application, found on the council website.

Girls should only participate in troop money-earning projects when:

- Their participation is voluntary
- The girl's parent or guardian has given written permission
- The girls understand why the money is needed and can clearly explain the need to others
- The troop is earning only enough money to support its activities and the need for the funds is documented and well-established
- Local ordinances regarding involving children in money-earning activities, as well as health and safety laws, are observed
- The personal safety of each girl is protected
- An adult is present at all times during money-earning activities outside the meeting place
- Arrangements have been made for safeguarding the money

GSEM Policies Regarding Troop Money-Earning

- Each troop must participate in the annual Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri Cookie Program.
- All troop money-earning projects must be approved by the Neighborhood Treasurer.
- Troop money-earning projects must not compete with Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri fundraising efforts, (i.e., cookie and fall product activities and the United Way campaign). Troops participating in the fall product program may conduct additional money-earning activities during the time of the fall product program with the approval of the Neighborhood Treasurer. Consult the current Troop Money Earning Calendar on the council website for the exact dates troops may or may not conduct money earning activities.
- Troop money-earning activities should be conducted in the name of the troop and monies earned are considered troop funds. Monies earned may not be allocated or refunded to individual troop members.
- There shall be no paid advertisement to publicize troop money-earning events
- Adults may assist girls in their money-earning activity but shall not raise funds alone in the name of Girl Scouts
- Girl Scout troops shall not solicit businesses for donations, prizes or awards to be given for any purpose.
- Girl Scout troops shall not participate in product demonstration parties, raffles, drawings, games of chance, direct solicitation of cash, Internet sales or the sale or endorsement of commercial products.

For more information regarding Troop Money-Earning Activities, please refer to Volunteer Essentials.



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