Introduction to Girl Scout Leadership

Girl Scouts of Central Maryland
Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouts 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.

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.
General Girl Scout Information and Policies
Council Information

• Girl Scouts of Central Maryland serves Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties and Baltimore City

• One of a over 100 Councils in the USA

• Two Council Store Locations – Main Office and Camp Ilchester

• Four Council Owned Camps – Conowingo in Cecil County, Ilchester in Howard County, and Whippoorwill and Woodlands in Anne Arundel County
The Troops within the Council fall into 63 Service Units (SU). Each SU has a team of volunteers, in a variety of positions, not limited those listed below. The Service Team’s role is to support the troops in that area.

**Service Unit Team Positions**

- Service Unit Manager
- Secretary
- Troop Cluster Coordinator
- New Leader Orientation Coordinator
- Registrar
- SU Cookie Manager
Service Unit/Troop Support Specialist

Formerly known as a Membership specialist, a SU/Troop specialist, is a GSCM Council member, who works closely with the Service Teams and Troops. Each County and Baltimore City has their own SU/Troop Specialist.

The SU/Troop Specialist can answer questions about GSCM policies, sign off on Troop Travel and Money Earning forms, and provide assistance and resources when needed. To contact your SU/Troop Specialist please email Membercare@gscm.org.
GSCM Online Resources

- GSCM’s website – www.gscm.org
- GS411 & Event List – Current/Future GSCM Programs
- VINE – GSCM’s monthly Newsletter. Posted on our blog the 15th of every month.
- Forms – Searchable webpage that lists most commonly requested forms

Volunteer Resources Website:

Volunteer Essentials – Located under Program Resources
A valuable resource of Girl Scout policies, information, and programs.

GSCM Policies – Located under New Leader Resources
Covers GSCM regulations and policies

Safety Activity Checkpoints – Located under Troop Forms --- Safety
Review policies and procedures when planning activities for your troop.
When selecting **Volunteers**, then **Volunteer Resources**, you will get variety of resources.

- **Forms** allows you to search for documents and applications.

- **Training** will give you an overview of our training courses and information on how to register.

- **Financial Reporting System** links you to the portal for providing troop account information, requesting a letter to set up a bank account, and submitting end of year financial reports.

- **Volunteer Recognition** offers information on various GSUSA and council awards.
Volunteering with GSCM

The opportunities are endless. Adults can be:

* Troop Leaders
* Outdoor Certified Adult
* Meeting Helper
* Troop Co-Leaders
* Troop Treasurer
* Trip Chaperone
* First-Aider
* Cookie Manager
* Driver

and many more positions!!!

Any volunteer who works with Girl Scouts or money, must be a current registered Girl Scout member and background checked. **Background checks must completed every 3 years.**

**Sign up more volunteers to help you today!**

When your new volunteer registers, ask them to pick either a direct position (ex. Co-Leader) or to be a Friends and Family volunteer for your troop. Don’t forget to remind them to check their email about their Background Check!!!
Opportunity Catalog

If you are ready to get more adult volunteers and girls in your troop, put it in the Opportunity Catalog! (Helpful tip – Catalog is found under Troop Forms)

When new members register, they will search the Opportunity Catalog for Troops that have available spots. If you choose to opt into the Opportunity Catalog, they will be able to see your troop and join.

You always have the option to not have your troop listed in the Catalog. Simply go to the survey, to let us know that you do not want it listed.

It’s an easy way to get more girls and adult volunteers for your troop!!!
• You can stop here and take Quiz 1 of 4.

OR

• Wait until the end and take the entire 4 part-quiz at once.

• You must take ALL 4 quizzes to receive credit.
Girl Scout Safety
Girl Scout Safety Guidelines

The safety of our girls is our #1 priority.

Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls, and we all demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these guidelines at all times.
Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls. Two unrelated approved adults must be present at all times – one must be a female.

- Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old, out of high school, and Girl Scout registered members and background checked.

Get parent/guardian permission
- A parent/guardian permission form is required when girls are participating in an activity outside the regular meeting place.

Follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints.
- Instructions for staying safe. Please review these when planning activities with the girls.
Role-model the right behavior

• Never use illegal drugs.

• Don’t consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Alcohol is prohibited at any girl program, including when girls have gone to bed at camp.

• Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls.
Create an emotionally safe space.

• Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement – how they should act and treat each other.

• Encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions and resolving conflicts constructively.

• Avoid physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior, and discrimination.
Travel safely.
  • Drivers must be registered adult volunteers, at least 21 years of age, with a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.

  • Everyone must have a seat with a seat belt.

  • Adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

Ensure safe overnight outings.
  • Men must have their own sleeping area and restroom.

  • When parents are staffing events, daughters should remain in quarters with other girls rather than in staff areas.
Ensure that no girl is treated differently.
• When scheduling activities carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.

Promote online safety.
• Teach girls the Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge and have them commit to it.

Keep girls safe during money-earning.
• During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products.

• When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout–approved product sales and efforts.
Report abuse.
• Follow our council’s guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting.

Be prepared for emergencies.
• Establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/adults, etc.

• Always keep a well stocked first aid kit on hand.
Additional First Aid Information

• Troops will need at least one adult, who is background checked and a registered member, certified in basic First Aid/CPR. GSCM offers First Aid/CPR training or you may take if from another company or organization. If you do not take the training through Girl Scouts, you will need to submit your certification using the First Aider registration form (08-1602). *Please note online/hybrid classes are not allowed.*

• Girl Scouts must follow the Hippa Law, which requires health history information to be kept confidential.

• Medication, including over-the-counter products, must never be dispensed without prior written permission from a girl’s parent or guardian.

• Sunscreen and Bug Spray – The Maryland Dept. of Health recommends that authorization from a girl’s parent/guardian is needed before applying these.
In the event of an accident

• GSCM Procedures: Please refer to our Crisis Communication Plan for Council Volunteers (00-600) and the Emergency Procedure Card (00-600a). This information is available in troop resource packets and is also available online.

• When an accident or incident (involving people, property, theft, fire, behavioral issues, or other) occur at a Girl Scout sponsored activity, GSCM must be informed within 48 hours. Please complete the GSCM Incident/Accident form (07-127).

For more Information on Safety –

Please read Chapter 4 of Volunteer Essentials
You can stop here and take Quiz 2 of 4.

OR

Wait until the end and take the entire 4 part-quiz at once.

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Managing Troop Finances
Bank Account Information

Leaders cannot open a Bank Account until they have completed the following steps:

1) Become a registered and background checked Girl Scout Adult member.
2) Completed a Meet and Greet with your Service Unit Team.
3) Completed GS 101 and Introduction to Girl Scout Leadership.
• You are welcome to use the bank of your choice. Ask your Service Unit Team for suggestions.

• Bank Accounts must be opened in the name of Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM) Troop #____. Please note – no grade level is attached to the account.

• You must use GSCM’s Federal ID number - # 52-0780207 when opening an account.

• There must be 3 registered Girl Scout members, background checked, and unrelated adults.

• Banks must receive a Bank Authorization letter from GSCM. Log into the Financial Reporting System to complete this request.

• You will need to provide your address when opening the account, but no address should be imprinted on the checks.

• You will need to have a debit card to use with our online registration program and purchases. Do not use the debit card for cash withdrawals. Keep all receipts.
Troop/Group Funds

• Adults handling monies must be registered Girl Scout members and have completed a background check.

• Troops are required to complete a Year End Financial Report, so it is important to keep receipts. The report is done via Financial Reporting System in May/June.

• Girl Scouts is a tax exempt organization. Tax Exempt Cards are available for purchasing troop supplies. You should receive a card during your Meet and Greet with your Service Unit Team.

• We never want Girl Scouting to be unaffordable to any girl. Please email membercare@gscm.org to find out more information about Financial Assistance.
Girl Scouting offers wonderful resources to teach girls fiscal responsibility. It is important that the girls learn budgeting and money management skills so that the troop can be self supporting.
Troop Dues and Money Earning

• Troop Dues stay with the troop. Be sure to choose an amount that is manageable - $1.00 - $2.00 per meeting. Some troops ask parents to pay dues up front or quarterly. Please provide payment options so this doesn’t cause a financial burden on parents.

• GSCM has a Fall Cookie Program. Each troop must have a Troop Cookie Manager. Training is provided by the Service Unit Cookie Manager. GSCM also has a spring magazine sale which is an online girl program requiring little troop leader involvement.

• There are circumstances that troops may need an additional money earning activity. You must complete the Permission for Troop-Group Money Earning form. Your Service Team and a GSCM Service Unit/Troop Support Specialist must approve it, before starting any money earning.

• Your troop must participate in cookie sales in order to be considered for additional money earning activities. Troops are generally only allowed two additional money earning activities in a Girl Scout year.
Girl Scouts of Central Maryland Council Funding

GSCM is funded through various sources.

- Program Service/Event Fees
- Store Sales
- Private Donations and Grants
- Girl Scout Product Sales – cookies and magazines
- Family Partnership – GSCM Annual Giving Campaign (formerly called SHARE) this is an opportunity for families and friend to contribute to our local council. Even staff participates because we believe in the girls of GSCM and the Girl Scout mission.
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Planning a Meeting
The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

WHAT GIRLS DO
- DISCOVER
- CONNECT
- TAKE ACTION

HOW THEY DO IT
- GIRL-LED
- COOPERATIVE LEARNING
- LEARNING BY DOING
Girl Scouts is Girl Led

Girl Led means that all girls have the chance to make decisions and shape their own experiences.

For example, younger girls might:

- Brainstorm questions they want to ask a guest speaker
- Work together to create an opening ceremony
- Decide as a team what kind of take action project they want to do
Older girls might:

- Choose a Destinations trip they want to take
- Decide on a Take Action project and organize the whole thing

Being a Troop leader for older girls may mean that you are acting more as a mentor and advisor as the girls get older.
Challenges of Girl led...

The girl led process is both uniquely important to girls and can be the most challenging for adult volunteers to implement. It can be hard for adults to “give up the reigns” so to speak, and let girls make decisions about their activities and lead. However, we have seen that when adults let girls step into the planning, gain experience guiding their peers and start making the important choices, great things happen for all.
Girl Scout Levels

- Girl Scout Daisies – Grades K-1
- Girl Scout Brownies – Grades 2-3
- Girl Scout Juniors – Grades 4-5
- Girl Scout Cadettes – Grades 6-8
- Girl Scout Seniors – Grades 9-10
- Girl Scout Ambassadors – Grades 11-12

Our program stresses progression with age appropriate activities.
Our National Leadership Development curriculum are the Journeys and the badges. The Journeys offer girls a chance to actively explore real-world challenges and team up to solve those problems they care deeply about. In the Girls Guide to Girl Scouting, you will find the Daisy Petals for Daisies and the skill building badges for the other levels. Together, these resources will help you guide the girls in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
The Volunteer Toolkit allows Leaders to digitally plan their year. It allows leaders to change and manipulate pre-planned meetings, share meeting and activity dates with parents, and print out a supply list.

To access your Volunteer Toolkit, log into your MYGS account.

For more information about what VTK can do please go to:
GSUSA VTK Videos
VTK Learning Webinar
VTK Learning PDF
Basic Troop Information

• Determine day, time, and location of meeting. Your Service Team may be able to help with this.

  Meeting locations should be:
  ✓ Free
  ✓ Large enough to accommodate the group and all activities
  ✓ Safe, secure, clean, and properly heated and cooled
  ✓ Accessible to sanitary toilets
  ✓ Have phone access – cell phone reception
  ✓ Offer accessibility to accommodate girls and/or parents with disabilities

Check your local churches, schools, libraries, and rec centers for availability.
First Meeting

• Hold a Parent Meeting. Check out the resources available under Leader Toolit for tips and information on our website.

Some topics to include:

✓ Girl Scout Program
✓ Health History and Registration Forms
✓ Product Sales
✓ Communicating with Parents
✓ Materials they will need to purchase such as Journey book, Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting, uniforms and insignia (troop #’s etc.)
✓ Parent Help and Expectations
✓ How to support GSCM through our Family Partnership Campaign

• Meet with the girls for the first time. This is the opportunity to get to know them and find out what they would like to do in the troop this year.
Additional Leader Information

• Items to have on hand at all times:
  ✓ permission slips
  ✓ health forms,
  ✓ first aid kit
  ✓ insurance forms,
  ✓ emergency information.

• When you are ready to venture away from your meeting place, you will need to have a permission slip for every girl.

• When you are ready to take your troop camping, you will need an adult who has completed the appropriate camp training. Training starts with a self-study Outdoor 101: An Introduction to the Out of Doors.
Volunteer Training

To support you, GSCM provides a wide variety of learning opportunities. Training information can be found on our website under the Volunteer Resources section or in Event Listings.

- New Leaders required training: Girl Scouting 101/Introduction to Girl Scout Leadership/Grade Level training. The Grade Level Training is offered in person or as a Home Study.

Other GSCM opportunities include:

- First Aid/CPR We also have a partnership with the Red Cross. Anyone wishing to take a Red Cross course can contact GSCM for a 20% discount code.

- Outdoor Training – Outdoor 101, Basic Troop Camping and Open Fire Cooking, Tent Camping, Geocaching, Novelty Cooking, Archery Certification, and Kayak/Canoe Certification.
Next Steps

• If you haven’t done so already, meet with a member of your Service Team for a Service Unit Meet and Greet.

• If during Cookie time, meet with the Service Unit Cookie Manager to receive training on the Cookie Program.

• Complete your leadership training – Girl Scouting 101, Introduction to Girl Scout Leadership (this course), and Grade Level Training.

• Arrange a Parent Meeting

• Meet with the Girls!
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THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

HAVE FUN AND ENJOY!
Questions?

Please contact Member Care at membercare@gscm.org